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Events of the Week.

THE military situation continues to take its color chiefly from factors which are not purely military. The new submarine campaign has gathered way and made considerable inroads upon the available sea transport. Perhaps the most significant feature in connection with it is the attack upon neutral ships. It is difficult to avoid seeing in this a mood of desperation. Neutrals, so maltreated, cannot be expected to supply Germany even with the small amount of commodities which they had put at her disposal before. And, pressed much farther, they may show their disapproval by the kind of active hostility which is plainly threatened by Holland. Meanwhile the German cannon-fodder is still being fed to the French pieces without any effect commensurate with the cost. The war, for the moment at least, seems to have become less a military problem than a gamble in psychological and political motives and reactions. The issue can hardly be favorable to Germany.

THE new submarine campaign continues with unabated vigor. Since its initiation about a hundred vessels have been either sunk or placed *hors de combat*, and more than a third of the number were neutral vessels. Seven neutral vessels were sunk during the first three days of the week; and almost all the ships attacked since March 1st were struck in British waters. When this is remembered, it is easy to understand the refusal of the Netherlands Government to continue the transport of the British and German incapacitated prisoners of war. This is a bye-product of the campaign, which doubtless was not anticipated; but it is significant as showing that already Germany has made our communications with the Continent unsafe. It is true that there is little chance of the Navy failing to guard certain

avenues which supply the direct military needs of the Allies. But as the losses of the mercantile marine before March 1st have not been made good, the effects of the new campaign may be serious. If the loss of transport can be pressed much further, it is bound to raise the prices of even necessities, and though, so far as we can see, it can have no direct bearing upon the war, it may make our people restless.

THE morality of the campaign is as indefensible as its legality. Its risks to Germany suggest that it is a weapon of desperation. Holland is angry and inflamed, and not likely to permit any further infringement of her rights. Opinion in the United States has now to swallow the German reply regarding the attack upon the "Sussex" and several other vessels. There is, according to the Note, a reasonable explanation of all the cases cited. The question of the "Sussex," which is most critical, is a gem. The Note states that a vessel was sunk upon March 24th near the site of the "Sussex" attack, but from a drawing of it, the German Government judges it was not the Channel boat. The submarine commander thought it one of the new British mine layers and he, admittedly, sank it without warning. This admission is made because the evidence of an attack by submarine without warning is particularly clear in the case of the "Sussex," and it has been suggested that President Wilson may seize upon the denial of the identity of the vessel to extort an extension to freight vessels of the implied principle that passenger vessels will not be attacked without warning. It seems more probable that a final note, based upon the numerous illegal attacks upon vessels carrying Americans, may be sent, and a parting come about on it.

THE attacks at Verdun worked up at the beginning of the week to a general offensive west of the Meuse which had the completeness of a battle. Against the front from Avocourt to the Meuse about 80,000 men were sent forward after an intense artillery preparation which lasted during the whole of Saturday. The French line made a salient pointing towards the Malancourt-Bethincourt road. Bethincourt had been evacuated upon the preceding evening, and the French positions were withdrawn about a third of a mile. The object of the general assault was to batter in the salient beyond Hill 304 and Dead Man Hill, which lay at its base. Upon Saturday morning the attack was launched, and the Germans, going forward in dense masses, were met by machine guns and artillery with terrible effect. As the infantry were cut to pieces, they were withdrawn, only to reappear when reformed. The Avocourt redoubt was the scene of a fierce struggle, and the Germans were able to penetrate one of the French trenches for a few moments; but a bayonet attack then put them to flight.

It was between Cumières and Dead Man Hill that the struggle came to a climax. Until this hill is in the hands of the Germans, even the outer defensive line west of the Meuse has not been won. After a most persistent attack upon Sunday night, the Germans were able to

secure a footing upon the slopes of the coveted hill. Here, about a quarter of a mile from the summit of the hill, the German regiments are held in the 500 yards of trench they have captured. On Monday and Tuesday further attempts were made to press the attack home. There were attacks upon Hill 304 and upon Dead Man Hill from the north-west, north, and east. An attempt to debouch from the Crow's Wood was shattered by curtain fire, and the same fate met an attack with jets of flaming liquid from the Cumières flank of the hill, but not before the Germans had gained a slight footing in the advanced trenches. On Tuesday there were also attacks, accompanied by jets of flaming liquid, upon the sector east of the Meuse, from Douaumont to Vaux. After an initial success, the Germans were quickly driven out of the small portion of the line they had taken.

At present there seems to be another lull in the attack; but, in spite of the fact that the German losses during the three days are estimated at 30,000, it is improbable that the cessation is anything but a breathing space. It seems unlikely that this splendid defence of Dead Man Hill can be continued much longer; but General Pétain is exacting a heavy price for it. Even when it is taken, the Germans will be confronted by the continuous and powerful line of the main defence. There is just a possibility that the approach to this line may offer the Germans a suitable chance of breaking off the struggle for Verdun. Until the first line upon the west is forced, the present German positions upon the east of the river are not secure, and should an Allied offensive begin, might be recovered under enfilading fire with little difficulty. But it seems more probable that the Germans are determined to enter Verdun, and the French will not deny them the privilege, if they will pay the price. All the signs go to show that it will be a costly, perhaps a quite deadly and determining, enterprise.

THE relief of Kut seems to be almost as far off as ever. The determined attacks of the 13th Division carried the British past the Felahiyah position. The success was not lightly won. Without accepting the Turkish accounts, which state that 3,000 British dead were counted, it is clear that an advance against carefully entrenched positions over flat ground cannot fail to be expensive. Having passed the Turkish lines at Felahiyah, the British found themselves faced by the Sanna-i-Yat position, which is a sort of gate between the marshes north and south of the river. The positions were attacked upon Sunday morning, but without achieving any success. The floods hamper any advance, and the outlook cannot be pronounced anything but critical. General Gorringe is a young and brilliant general, and he has at his disposal a fair number of seasoned troops. But the best of troops cannot accomplish the impossible, and we cannot share the hopefulness of General Townshend as to the chances of relief. It is true that when he cabled Sir Lionel Phillips a week ago, the abortive attack upon the Sanna-i-Yat lines had not been made.

THE Prime Minister, speaking to the members of the Franco-British Parliamentary Committee, gave a direct and very satisfactory reply to the German Chancellor's challenge that his policy was the destruction of the German State and its economic ruin after the war. Great Britain and France, he said, entered the conflict not to strangle Germany, or to wipe her off the map of Europe, but to prevent her from "establishing a position of military menace and dominance over her neighbors," and to set up "the principle of equal rights for all

civilized States." As a result of the war, the Government wished to set up the principle of "free negotiation on equal terms between free peoples, no longer hampered and swayed by the over-mastering dictation of a Government controlled by a military caste."

MR. ASQUITH applied this doctrine of freedom to the two examples in which the German Chancellor proposes to violate it. As for the "new" Poland, he asked whether it was proposed to apply to it such disciplinary methods as the flogging of the school children of Posen who were ordered to say their prayers in German. As for a "new" Belgium, with which the author of the pillage and rapine of 1914 was to establish "neighborly" relations, the Allies would insist on the old Belgium, completely "repaired and restored." On the general question of peace, the Allies were asked to assume the attitude of defeat. "But we are not defeated; we are not going to be defeated." These phrases and criticisms carry us back to the Dublin speech, which the reply to Mr. Snowden unfortunately obscured, but is now reinstated as the cardinal declaration of British aims. In other words, we stand for reconstituting Europe, not for blotting out the central block, or even for isolating it. Only the block is not to be rolled out on the one side to Antwerp and on the other to Warsaw or even to Baghdad. Germany can be as much Germany as she pleases; but she is not going to flatten out any competing form of national life, to the east of her or the west of her, into her German mould.

LORD CROMER's letter to the "Times" on our objects in the war is one of the wisest things that have been written since it began, and one of the most opportune. Writing after the Chancellor's speech, but before Mr. Asquith's, he pointed out that the difficulties of concluding peace would be great so long as the Germans believe, or affect to believe, that our object is to "destroy" the military power of Prussia. That power will always be great, and we complain only that it should be in absolutist hands. There can be no durable peace while Junkerdom is dominant, but to control Junkerdom must be the work of the Germans themselves, and in that work we cannot interfere. There is no need that we should continue the struggle for military glory, or to humiliate Germany, to obstruct her economic evolution, or even to avenge the misdeeds of her forces in this war. With these propositions we are in full agreement, and they are also in harmony with the spirit of Mr. Asquith's declaration. Lord Cromer's further stipulation that we must go on fighting "until the Germans are converted, or realize that their present policy and system of government are a curse to themselves and the rest of the world," can be brought to only one satisfactory test. Will they conclude a peace on which, in Mr. Asquith's own words, "a real European partnership" can be based? Their real "conversion" can be shown only this way. Internal changes we must not expect until the war is over.

MR. ASQUITH made very short work of the deputation of the "National Union of Attested Married Men" (what a title!) which waited on him on Wednesday with a charge that he had failed to fulfil a "pledge" to them. Asked what the pledge consisted in, the Prime Minister was answered "The pledge that single men should go first." "So they are," replied Mr. Asquith, and there was really nothing to add. The Prime Minister did, however, point out that the lists of badged and starred men had been constantly revised and cut down. But he vehemently repudiated the attempt to father a second

pledge on the Government, that is to say, an engagement to apply compulsion to married men who did not attest. "I never said anything of the kind. No member of the Government said anything of the kind." All that Mr. Asquith would admit was there should be a remedy for men who had been led to attest under a false pretence that attestation alone would give a ground of appeal against service, and that there should be "equitable" relief for recruits who left special obligations behind them. That is the real crux of the married men's case.

MEANWHILE, the demand for general conscription has been made simultaneously in the House of Commons and the House of Lords by Sir Edward Carson and Lord Milner respectively. Lord Milner's motion asks that an Act should be passed rendering "all men of military age liable to be called upon for military service during the continuance of the war," and Sir Edward Carson, in heavier verbiage, demands the same general measure of conscription based on "equality of sacrifice." Sir Edward does not show how there is to be equality of sacrifice between men born in one month who are forced to serve, and men born a month earlier or later who are not; or between impressed soldiers and retained miners or munition workers; or between married recruits with children and those without. Behind these demands there has been an obvious Cabinet movement of sympathy, led by Mr. Bonar Law, and threatening at one time the break-up of the Government. For the moment, this has been averted, probably by the sacrifice of the boys of eighteen, who will pass automatically into the colors. But Parliament will have to pass an Enabling Bill, and this will be fiercely contested.

THE Budget, ably defended by Mr. McKenna and Mr. Montagu, looks like standing. There have been only two changes. The much too oppressive railway tax has been dropped and the match tax modified.

THE papers have given prominence this week to some disclosures from Sweden as to German plans for recovering her foreign trade after war by an organized effort. Arrangements are already said to be made for the credit side of these operations, which include the export of toys and ready-made clothes, especially to Russia. Though this is called "dumping," no details are given as to the proposed sale of these things below cost price. It seems to be an effort on the same lines as our own, and neither more nor less legitimate. It is French trade which is in real danger. From Tourcoing, Lille, and the whole of the rich industrial region which they occupy, the Germans are believed to have removed the machinery from the factories, so that not only must great loss follow, but French industry will be handicapped and delayed when the moment comes to start again. This seems a peculiarly bad form of commercial militarism, and the answer to it must certainly be a demand for the restoration and replacement of all these stolen goods.

LORD DERBY and Lord Montagu have brought the discussion of the organization and development of the air service to a head by resigning their positions upon the Joint Air Committee. Lord Montagu gave the reasons for his action in a speech at Birmingham on Wednesday. The Committee he held to be an unworkable institution since no recommendation could be made to the War Committee unless the Committee were unanimous. He had submitted to the Cabinet a scheme for a Board of Aviation. In the meantime he put forward a series of propositions which, if admitted, demonstrate the immanence of the problem of aviation. He held that military operations amounted to a deadlock, and since

the same was true of naval operations, so far as all but submarines are concerned, the war would be largely decided in the air and beneath the sea. Without admitting his premises we can agree with the conclusions, though it is hardly probable that air machines will have in this war any great military effect as a separate arm. Aeroplanes are the eyes of the Army and Navy, and any shortage of supply is therefore vital.

WHERE we are most in agreement with Lord Montagu is that a Board of Aviation be created. The details of Mr. Billing's scheme are already available. He suggests that the Board should comprise eight members: an Air Minister, who should have a seat in the Cabinet, Directors of Operations, Air Defences, Construction, Personnel, and Equipment, with representatives of the Army and Navy. The necessary functions of an Air Board seem to be covered by this scheme, and if the correct members could be secured, we should have initiated a movement which might have the most far-reaching effects. There is a traditional inertia which seems to affect most Government departments, though probably it has affected the Admiralty least of all. There is no reason why we should not at once lay the foundations of a similar initiative and efficiency. It is hardly possible that we have more than touched the fringe of the problem of aviation at present, and the inventions that are to come are fraught with the widest potentialities of peace and goodwill, as well as of war. The Government should act at once with a touch of real imagination, and create a Board of Aviation, having the best scientific advice at its disposal.

THE report on the state of the Wittenberg Camp during the typhus epidemic of last year is a shocking document. It was prepared by Mr. Justice Younger chiefly on the testimony of Major Priestley, Captain Vidal, and Captain Lauder, of the R.A.M.C., who were sent to the camp after the outbreak of the epidemic and have recently been allowed to return to England. The camp contained over 15,000 prisoners of war, of whom about 800 were British. The outbreak is attributed to overcrowding, bad and insufficient food, dirt, and cold. The men were obliged to sleep three on a mattress, and when the outbreak occurred in December, 1914, the whole German staff left the camp and communicated with it only by orders shouted from a distance.

No medical attention was given by the Germans. Under the terrible conditions obtaining it is a wonder that any survived the epidemic. If a victim brought his mattress to hospital, his companions were left to sleep on the floor. If the mattress were left behind, the other men became infected. The men had to be carried to hospital on tables from which they ate their food, and these could not be washed because of the shortage of soap. Two of the medical officers succumbed to the disease a month after they entered the hospital, and another died a little later. The German medical officer, Dr. Aschenbach, only once entered the camp after the outbreak, though his services have been rewarded by the Iron Cross. His refusal of medical requisites with the remark "Schweine Engländer" will live long in the memory. The treatment during the epidemic is stated to be only in keeping with the brutality of the régime before the outbreak. Savage dogs were employed to terrorize prisoners; there were constant floggings with rubber whips; and men were tied for hours to posts, with their arms above their heads. Germany is so deeply stained as to be beyond shame; but this blot on her medical service shows that Europe only faintly realizes the measure of her corruption.

Politics and Affairs.

THE SORT OF PEACE WE WANT.

EUROPE has this week reverted to the international usage known as diplomacy. The cannon go on roaring; but the statesmen have begun to talk to each other. We have often deplored the fact that this war, in contrast with earlier European conflicts, such as the Seven Years' War, has produced a total cessation of these exchanges, and that a tremendous turmoil of physical force, locking scores of races in its embrace, and engulfing millions of humble lives, should proceed for month after month without a really enlightening word from its civil directors. The word has now come. Germany and England have spoken in each other's ears, with no abatement of their ill-will, but with an effort to explain and justify their political objects. Herr von Bethmann-Hollweg has challenged Mr. Asquith to explain himself. Mr. Asquith has responded, and in turn the German Chancellor must deal with the English rejoinder. There was the very good reason for this action that on two crucial and related points the aims of this country have been widely misunderstood in Germany. The first of these points was based on the German reading of Mr. Asquith's phrase that the sword of the nation would not be sheathed "till the military domination of Prussia is wholly and finally destroyed." These words seemed to open up an almost interminable vista of war. They might be taken to mean that the military aim of beating Germany in the field must be pressed until either the German armies had ceased to exist or the German State had been reconstituted, and the Prussian hegemony, established in 1870, annulled. This interpretation, at all events, Herr von Bethmann-Hollweg chose to assume. England was out to destroy the "united and free Germany" of the great federating year, and that being the object, let the sword decide the issue.

The second German statement of British policy was more serious, for there has been a distinct and powerful body of British opinion behind it. It was that of an economic war, which in effect substituted for our original object of a concert of nations a perpetual state of siege of one half of Europe by the other. Here again, the German vision of the "war after war" of our Protectionist fanatics did not want for picturesqueness. "First militarily and then economically," commented the German Chancellor, "are we to be destroyed," and a "people of seventy millions" permanently "crippled." The Prime Minister saw at once the necessity of re-stating the case for the moderate, defensive, and rational aims of this country which had thus been travestied. We had, he said, taken up arms not to destroy or mutilate the national life of Germany, but to prevent her from establishing a military menace over her neighbors, and to substitute for the dominance of a single ambition, "an international system which will secure the principle of equal rights for all civilized States," established and maintained by "free negotiation on equal terms between free peoples." Furthermore, our object was not, as the Chancellor maintained, to interfere with the "peaceful endeavors" of German industry, or their "free exercise." The second assurance was not so explicit as the first, but we may take it that Lord Crewe fairly stated its substance when he declined to base our future commercial policy on a "system of frantic revenge." We will go further, and say that the Liberal and democratic parties refuse to co-operate in such a scheme of war policy, and

that any Government which identifies the country with it ceases to be national in spirit and in fact.

Let us, then, in the face of Mr. Asquith's reaffirmation of a humane and essentially unaggressive policy, brush away these monstrous accretions, and see where the heart of the controversy lies. We must also chase away the mere illusions of hope that surround it. Germany as yet offers us no terms of peace we can accept, for she speaks as if the Allies were a defeated Power. The Chancellor's speech is indeed a door which opens both ways, and it is not difficult to see the reason for its double outlook. The Chancellor is speaking not to Germany but to Germany's foes; but he has two Germanies in his mind's eye, a more or less victorious Germany and a more or less beaten one. He knows that, as we argue elsewhere, the German armies have no stable military position, no ground from which the half-Europe embattled against them can be dictated to in the language and on the terms of a Napoleon. So he speaks in a series of conundrums, the reading of which divides his home critics no less than his enemies. Of France he says nothing. Clearly he contemplates no annexations of French territory. Verdun has settled the integrity of the French Fatherland as it has re-established its glory on the enduring basis of a defensive war. Neither, we think, does he contemplate a military retention of the precarious foothold the Kaiser's armies maintain in the West. Belgium, he says, must not be allowed to sink into vassalage to France and ourselves. *A fortiori* then she cannot be condemned to vassalage to the violator of her territory. What, then, is to be her status after the war? Complete independence? No. Not only are there to be guarantees against Belgium's economic dependence on France or England, but there is to be some unspecified cultivation of the Teutonic at the expense of the Latin element, a division of the two strands of the nation which German cruelty and faithlessness bound into one. We suggest, in passing, that if there are to be "guarantees" against an Anglo-French enclave—which of course we should give and a reconstituted Belgium require—still stronger must be Belgium's "guarantee" against an economic capture of Antwerp. But the solution of division is unthinkable. England did not set her honor and power at stake to see a new divided Belgium spring up under the heel of the German occupation. But it is easy to see that if the fortunes of war do not pronounce for the invading legions, the civil masters of them have made no proposition which commits them to demanding a real hold on Belgium. The masked retreat has begun; we may be quite sure that the final political withdrawal from France and Flanders will be as complete as our own physical escape from the beaches and coves of Gallipoli.

But the East? There, indeed, a more formidable proposition seems to present itself. What does the Chancellor mean when he proposes a Russian surrender from the Baltic Sea to the Volhynian swamps, sweeping in not merely Poles, but more fully Russianized Lithuanians, Balts, and Letts, and seeming to assign to Germany the great Russian fortresses in a line from Riga to Lemberg? Here again are conquerors' terms, though they are proposed with anything but the mien of a conqueror. Russia will scorn them, treating the German occupation as a passing incident of her story. But imagine the relaxation of the German grip on Poland and the Baltic provinces. In that case there seems to us to be nothing to prevent the Chancellor's door swinging back on its other hinge and revealing a scheme of Polish autonomy, to which the holders of Posen must assuredly make their contribution. For it is as a

liberating Power that Germany now chooses to make her appeal to the world, and if she is beaten, it is her own sins against liberty that will rise in earliest judgment against her.

At present, therefore, Germany is in the hopeless moral confusion in which those sins have involved her. With her foot on the territory of three of her neighbors, she labels her war defensive—the war that a word, a whisper, from her might have avoided. She proclaims her eagerness to re-assume the garb of a peaceful industrial State in the act of staking out a vast new territory in Eastern Europe. But she still shirks the issue. After the Asquith speech it is greatly simplified. Teutonic unity is her peculiar creation; it is not assailed. No trace of envy of the prosperity which is Germany's glory, no plan of revenge for the cruelties which are her shame, no thought of the military glory which has vanished, we hope for ever, from the awakened vision of the world, will pass into the spirit or the penmanship of the treaty of peace that Germany will be asked to sign. Nor, in spite of the wild talk and narrow vision of our own reactionaries, is Germany's commercial future endangered by an after-war boycott. But she has to commit one act of retrocession and amendment. She must withdraw from every rood of foreign land she now occupies, both her armies and the vast pretensions which sustain her policy of absorption and dominance. She has to acknowledge that there is such a thing as Europe, that European affairs are common affairs, the liberties of her States, great and small, common liberties, and European armaments things to be mutually discussed and limited. How much more dashing of her bravest against the wall of French patriotism or British stubbornness or Russian endurance does she need to convince her that "hegemony" is a dream, borrowed from Imperial Rome, that she may wade in blood to it and yet never grasp it? Of that truth we may well guess that her Chancellor is half-convinced, for it sounds through the tones and semi-tones of his speech; and we imagine that he sighs for the conversion of his countrymen. When that conversion comes the madness of this war will cease.

GERMANY'S DREAM OF VICTORY.

"Our enemies will have to admit one thing to themselves . . . that they have still to win everything that they wish to achieve, while we actually demand less than we already possess."—"Lokalanzeiger," quoted from "The Times."]

In announcing the peace terms that will be acceptable to him the other day, the German Chancellor took his stand upon the present military situation. After a brief survey he pronounced this to be "good." It was not to be expected that he should do otherwise. But his speech has been followed by numerous expansions of the general thesis both in speeches and newspaper articles, which show civilian Germany flushed with self-gratulation. We have no means of knowing how the German Staff look upon their achievements and prospects. Their view may be the Chancellor's. Glancing round in that somewhat inflamed mood which Madame de Staël held to be the natural product of thought in Germans, they may well contemplate the long sweep of fortified lines stretching from the Baltic to Bessarabia upon Russian soil, the steel wall from the Straits of Dover to Switzerland, their Allies moving freely from Albania to Asia Minor and even to beleaguered Kut. Seeing all this they may well wonder what remains to be done but to wait a little while till the unclouded vision of the enemy accepts the grand achievement of German Kultur.

The military literature of half a century offers many

an axiom behind which those who have this golden vision may entrench themselves. The question of the Colonies, which might seem to be a disturbing element, does not reach them. They answer, like Herr von Bethmann-Hollweg, with the Bismarckian phrase that the fate of the Colonies will be decided in Europe and that their victories on the Continent will secure them their overseas possessions. What truth is there in this position? It is clear that the Germans stand everywhere, except in one small stretch of land, upon Allied territory. If Germany is not victorious, what fallacy underlies their position? We do not require to think that the German Chancellor actually believes what he said. But the tone of his speech was certainly that of a victor, even if its terms were consciously exaggerated.

Since it is clear that, as Mr. Asquith pointed out, we do not admit that we are defeated, any judgment of the military situation must depend upon a number of assumptions. Germany may be victorious if we assume that the future will reproduce the past, that in the next twenty months she can conquer the same amount of territory that she has taken up to now. Merely to state this point is to expose its futility. No German dreams of it, and we must realize that since the war settled down in October, 1914, the balance of gains in the West has been with the Allies, that for two complete months, with huge losses, Germany has been battering at Verdun, and has only passed the outer defences upon one bank of the Meuse, that in mere square miles occupied, the Allies are more favorably situated than the Germans, who have lost all their colonies but one; that Russia, laboring under the most critical handicaps, fought Germany to a standstill last September, and that since then her armies have been re-created, while Germany's have only been able to fill up the normal wastage. Yet it is only on this assumption that Bismarck's dictum has any value. It was perfectly valid when swift and complete military decisions were still possible. Clearly, if you can so beat your enemy that he can no longer keep the field against you, any indemnities may be wrung from him. Colonies which have been seized may be reclaimed, and new ones demanded. But unless a decision can be obtained, colonies can only be gained or regained by barter. They are, in fact, so much territory belonging to a combatant which, like all other similar territory, is open to invasion and occupation. The only difference is the permanency of tenure. While our sea-power holds, Germany's occupied colonies can never be redeemed, except by exchange against the European territory she holds.

A real victory of Germany is practically impossible; but she may hope to secure the semblance of it. She may, that is to say, hope to secure, not, indeed, all that she desired, but more than we should freely grant her. The assumption which underlies this reading of the situation is that we are more tired of the strain than Germany, and our resources are less adequate to bearing with it than hers. If this were our condition, and we valued the occupied territory in Europe more than Germany her colonies, she might hope for the advantage in negotiation. But the German Chancellor made one significant admission. He spoke of the "superior numbers" of the Allies in the field. Now we have not only the men; we have the munitions, and we have the *moral* to continue. So far as we can gather, there is more articulate war-weariness in Germany and Austria than in any Allied country.

The situation, in fine, narrows down to this: Can Germany avoid defeat? Can she secure a stalemate? The possibilities of victory we have seen to be illusory. If Germany, with the flower of her armies in the field, could not achieve a decision, she never will in this war.

Now that her man-power is declining, it is impossible to think that she can ever advance further upon Allied territory to any significant extent. Her resources are hardly sufficient to last out ours, even if she should take refuge in a wholly un-German asceticism. The possibilities of a stalemate in the present situation seem at first sight far more considerable than in fact they are. The Germans may, with some reason, think that if they, with their carelessness as to risking human lives and with the experience gained in Galicia and Poland last year, cannot force back the line at Verdun more than a few miles, the same result will attend the Allied efforts to break through. If we cannot hope to redeem the occupied territory, if they can assume for it a permanency of state similar to that of their Colonies captured by the Allies, they may still hope for at least a stalemate.

There is one consideration which exposes the groundlessness of the German hope. With the exception of a few moments in the first Battle of Ypres, only once—in May—have the Germans ever broken the Allied line in the West so completely and for so long as the British tore open the enemy's lines at Neuve Chapelle, at Festubert, and at Loos. The essential difference between Loos and Verdun is that the British stopped for lack of direction and co-operation, whereas the Germans have failed to break the line in two months' hammering for lack of *impetus*. That is a significant difference, and it is, perhaps, fatal to all the German hopes of avoiding a complete defeat.

But there is another factor in the present situation which the German Staff, at any rate, must appreciate. The French are following the normal military theory of detached reserves. They have not so far attempted to wage a counter-offensive. They are allowing the Germans to waste themselves against the guns of Verdun. A year ago the Russians wasted the German strength in the same way. If Russia had been capable of a counter-offensive after Vilna, it is possible the war might have been over by this time. There is that dangerous possibility latent in the Verdun operations to-day. If Germany continues to waste her dwindling effectives as she has done for two months, she may take Verdun, but she may then have to meet the grand offensive of the Allies in a state of real exhaustion. To such a situation there could only be one end, and we find it hard to believe that, despite all this talk and elation of victory, responsible German opinion is not aware of it.

COMMON SENSE ABOUT CONSCRIPTION.

"Things are what they are. Their consequences are what they will be. Why, then, should we seek to be deceived?"

BUTLER'S great platitude has been always accepted in speech as an almost ridiculous platitude, and always denied in action as an impossible paradox. The bulk of mankind, knowing that things are what they are, make themselves believe that they are what they wish them to be. Knowing what will be the consequences, they cherish the hope that the consequences will be different. And in both these operations if the consequences are undesirable, they deliberately "seek to be deceived."

How impossible, for example, in this wild conflict about "Conscription," it is to get persons even of intelligence to agree on certain plain facts as a basis which all can accept, from which basis controversy might (if necessary) proceed! Yet if this basis be accepted, nine-tenths of the sloppy thinking of to-day would

vanish from the platform and the Press. It is as if, in youth, one sought to wander through the maze of Euclid without first accepting the postulates and axioms. Given these, inevitably you can prove that (say) the angles at the basis of an isosceles triangle are equal; without them you can prove nothing. It is true that there are some men who are incapable of reasoning even from those postulates to those simple propositions. Two (at least) of the greatest of Cambridge's classical scholars could only pass the entrance examination in Euclid by learning the whole book by heart. But reason on the whole slowly conquers. And it is worth while to see, before we build up our propositions with the final "Q. E. D.," whether we cannot get certain axioms and postulates which in a difficult controversy will be accepted by all men of goodwill.

Let it be granted therefore:—

1. That the vital service Britain performs to the Grand Alliance is the maintenance of the blockade and the freedom of the seas. That no conceivable activity can be transferred from the work on the ocean of maintaining watch and ward, and on land of repairing and replacing and increasing the vessels of the Royal Navy. It is understood that over a million men of military age are daily engaged in this double task. To withdraw one of them would be a crime.

2. That the second task of Britain in the Alliance is the maintenance of the mercantile marine: to use the freedom of the seas which we have won, and to carry to and fro on these seas, food, stores, and supplies, and the implements of war. Therefore that the men of the mercantile marine, now in part jeopardized by the German submarine warfare, should be increased rather than diminished: and that the best of our workmen should be engaged in the work of building ships, repairing them, and generally developing a marine which is serving alike all the Allies—without which the Alliance would perish.

3. That as this country has guaranteed to finance the Alliance to the extent of between three and four hundred millions of money, that obligation must be fulfilled. It can only be fulfilled in one of two ways. We cannot perform it by exporting gold, as we have not the gold to export. We must therefore either keep a small army of mechanics and munition makers here in England, choking up our own munition factories, to supply the goods which the Allies desire; or we must let some neutral country as (say) America, supply the goods, and pay America for them by sending goods to America in exchange for what she wants. Thus if (for example) Serbia demands two million boots, we must either make two million boots for Serbia in our boot factories, where the Serbian orders would clash with our own; or let Serbia obtain two million boots from America, and pay America by exports of, say, cotton or coal. And each worker for such cotton or coal is as much a war worker, and as indispensable to the carrying out of our promise to the Allies, as if he was armed with bomb or bayonet on the frontiers of Flanders.

[Incidentally it may be granted that even if the Serbian boots be made at home, the raw material and the wages represented by notes and gold to the makers of them must be paid for by imports of goods, which in their turn can only be paid for by exports.]

4. Britain is also importing immense quantities of munitions, of the raw materials of munitions, and of food. These cannot be paid for by notes or gold. They must, therefore, be paid for by exporting to the countries which supply them the goods which they desire. Such goods must be made—they are coal (which at the surface is a manufactured product) or some other manufactured

product. And every man required for their making cannot, therefore, be spared for service abroad.

In addition, the action, present and to come, of the German submarine makes it more and more necessary at the moment to get every fragment of British earth producing edibles—of any kind, from corn to carrots. England might win great battles abroad. All her victories would be failures if she were starved at home, as Germany is realizing to-day.

5. This is an engineer's war. Equipment and the newer forms of mechanical destruction are far more important than the raw material of an army. It is better to have 200 men at home making a machine gun than to have those 200 men at the front blown to pieces in ten minutes for lack of a machine gun. Munitions, more munitions, and again munitions—monster howitzers which will tear up the ground for a hundred yards, all new forms of deadly inventions, bombs, explosive shells—without these the largest army in Europe becomes (in combat) but a mob of men shambling to their death.

Recently in the House of Commons a sneer was pronounced (destined to go through Europe) that the young single Englishmen were hiding in the munition factories. As a matter of fact the young single Englishmen with any training in the making of munitions were forbidden to enlist or attest, and were shovelled into the munitions departments, and now have to listen in patience to these foolish gibes. But, generally, we may let it be granted that 100,000 men properly armed must defeat 1,000,000 men imperfectly supplied with heavy and light artillery, the most effective explosives, the most efficient bombs, and all the terrible apparatus of modern war. You cannot fight with bows and arrows against 15-inch guns.

6. Let it be granted also that you weaken rather than strengthen your army by taking in an inefficient man. The country loses any productive power he possesses. He costs the country at least £200 a year. He spends his time in hospital, or in pitifully weakening any regiment to which he is sent, or in dying and leaving wife and children or mother as perpetual pensioners to his country. "Battalions of only 500 men!" cry the Conscriptionists in horror. Yes; but if you put 500 physical inefficients into such a battalion you do not make it equivalent to 1,000 or to 700. You do not even leave it at 500. You actually reduce it to an effective strength below its 500 fit men who would have remained without this "dilution." So that the tribunals and those amazing medical doctors who are thrusting into the Army men with phthisis, cancer, one kidney, rupture, one glass eye, or even with two eyes which cannot see five feet before them, are not only piling up the cost of the Army with no efficient return, and sending innocent men to their death: they are actually ruining an Army which they think they are helping to save.

Nor must it be forgotten that as your Army mounts in numbers, the percentage of inefficients left behind is enormously increased. That was one of the many grave omissions which rendered so grotesque the Derby Report. In the ordinary conscript countries the neutral percentage of conscripts unfit for service varies between 25 to 33 per cent.—that is, 33 out of every 100 men of military age examined and rejected in the flower of their manhood. In conscription imposed suddenly upon *all* men of military age, the diseases which were non-existent at 19 are prominent at 33 or 40. And in that case, therefore, the non-effectives rise to something like 50 per cent. But when, *before* you have imposed conscription, you have allowed three millions of your efficient to go off to the war as volunteers, the percentage of the residue rises up to 60, 70, or even nearly 80 per cent. It is evident that neglect to realize this has blown the estimates of Lord

Derby's Report into meaningless fragments directly they become applied to real life; and that the actual multiplication of ineffectives (for military service) has so driven the Army doctors to despair as to have led them to pass men into the Army with withered arms and every variety of outward maiming or internal disease.

These are the axioms and propositions which cannot be denied. They can be estimated by really able actuaries, and from them figures can be obtained which are beyond the reach of controversy. All controversy, therefore, should be conducted outside this estimate. The question primarily is not, and never has been, "How many men do the Armies want?" but "How many men can be spared for the Armies?" For if we fail in any of the above five essential propositions, an army of tens of millions in Flanders would not save us. Britain would be beaten, and with Britain, the Alliance. And it is certain that long before Peace is declared, every combatant will be fighting with armies greatly diminished from the present.

There are, indeed, two replies to these uncontrovertible axioms:—

The first is the assertion that we can substitute for the men necessary for (1) to (5) either men of military age who are inefficient for military work, or men over military age, or women. In so far as this can be done, it should be done, and is being done. But it cannot be done very much longer, and it can only be done gradually, for there cannot be any break in the continuity of the essential processes of victory. It is of no use sending (say) commercial travellers of thirty-six or forty to the riveting of a damaged ship, in which the essence of the contract is haste. At the end of twelve hours' continuous work the ship would not be riveted, the commercial travellers would be prostrate. Nor is it any use to send London clerks to hew coal in dangerous inflammable mines, in which hewers (before the war) were legally forbidden to work without two years' experience. You will not get your coal (and coal is the most important of all your munitions) and you will probably get eight hundred or a thousand coal-getters blown into eternity with a "regrettable explosion." And so through all the "heavy" trades, of which a good fourth have gone to the war, from which none can be spared.

Secondly, it is asserted by those who wish to sow mischief between the Allies that we are doing the easy part; others are giving lives, we merely money and munitions. To which we can only reply that in the Grand Alliance each nation can only do the part that Nature fitted it to do. If (for example) Russia could take up the blockade, our million men who sustain it would gladly undertake war work on land. If France could finance the Allies, we would give all the man-power to war-power which is now occupied in the less romantic work of money-power. If Italy possessed the coal, and we the industries which the coal requires, we would send our industrial population to the war and obtain coal from Italy. If, indeed, we could raise the embargo on coal workers, dockers, railway men, munition makers, engineers, we could, without doubt, raise an army of a million—all volunteers. It would be magnificent. But it would not be war.

These figures being granted by all sides, there remains a far narrower field for the realm of controversy. For example, if two million able-bodied efficient, willing men of military age, remained, stolidly refusing to volunteer, it might be necessary to pass a Conscription Bill. If only 200,000 remained, of which all knew many were unfit, many unwilling, many approaching middle-age and fathers of large families, it would be monstrous to raise

the whole Conscription controversy, to estrange the trade unions, to separate rich and poor, to break up the political truce, to violate that "equality of sacrifice" which free voluntary service alone can give, merely to pass into the Army, somewhere about next Christmas, a reluctant, doubtfully efficient minority who could be of no service at all in the ultimate struggle. Let us receive now those who have volunteered under the Derby scheme, and thus followed the great example of "voluntary service" of those who volunteered at the beginning. We shall still be an army of free men, except for the tiny and transitory attempt at Conscription of single men, which produced but a small percentage of the total armies, and left behind it the scandal of the tribunals, the alienation of masses of the working people, and all the material and moral record of failure. We shall then show at the last England and all the Dominions having ensured Liberty by means of Liberty and without the violation of Liberty, through the effort and sacrifice of great Armies, who went willingly to assist a sacred cause: "Good men—Volunteers!"

THE WAR AND BRITISH LIBERTIES.

I.—THE SUPPRESSION OF FREE SPEECH.

OUR statesmen have assured us that this is a war not only of armies but of ideals. It is for the defence of British freedom in the arts of civil life and government against the aggressive tyranny of Prussianism which, having fastened itself firmly upon the German people, seeks to extend its power over surrounding nations. Now, what is this Prussianism which is the enemy? Political thinkers tell us that it is a theory of the absoluteness of the State, psychologists that it is a tyrannous and a submissive state of mind. But if we are to understand it, it is best to trace it in its actual operations, as it affects the ordinary life of the German people. An English visitor to Germany before the war could not fail to be impressed by certain laws and regulations of an inquisitorial and restrictive character, and by the prevalence of an arrogant officialism. His baggage was rudely overhauled at the frontier. As soon as he reached his destination, he had to report himself to the authorities. This personal registration he soon learnt was part of the ordinary police surveillance of the country. As he walked abroad, public notices, carrying the intimidating words *Polizeilich verboten*, constantly caught his eye. He soon learned that it was a grave offence, meriting imprisonment, to speak in jesting or disparaging language of the Kaiser or other high authorities of State. German citizens, he found, were not free to organize or to attend meetings for the discussion of political or other matters without the express permission of the authorities, and at such meetings police inspectors were present to take notes. Newspapers were officially inspired or restricted in their expression of opinion, and press prosecutions were of frequent occurrence. Schools and universities were treated not as the instruments of disinterested learning, but as means of imposing on the German mind certain ideas and habits of thought favored by the ruling class and conducive to the maintenance of that rule.

Further inquiry into politics showed that in all departments of Government—imperial, state, or municipal—the real control lay in the hands of executive officials, not chosen by the people, but appointed from above. Administrative orders largely usurped the place of Parliamentary laws. Both the legislative powers of elective Parliaments and their control over finance were hampered and annulled in practice by the imperial pre-

rogative, and gross inequalities of franchise reduced representative government in Prussia itself to an absurdity. The power of Parliament to protect the liberties and interests of the people was inadequate or non-existent. Most striking of all were the evidences of the domination of the military over the civil authority and over the lives of individual citizens. The arbitrary insolence of Army officers was everywhere in evidence, and was dramatized in the incident of Zabern, where an officer ordered armed soldiers to assault civilians as punishment for discourtesy alleged against other civilians, and was supported in his cowardly illegality by his superior officers and the open applause of the Crown Prince. But the kernel of Prussianism was the power of the military authority to drag every young man, on attaining military age, from his home or his civil employment in order to put him into barracks and make of him a soldier. For this act stamped upon the life of Germany the essential nature of Prussianism, the arbitrary power of a military-bureaucratic State claiming to override all rights of civil life and private personality.

This brief citation of restraints and burdens will suffice to give the ordinary Englishman a concrete image of the Prussianism he is "out" to fight.

Will he be satisfied to crush this Prussianism abroad and on his return to find something like its facsimile established here in Britain? To some readers this question will appear to suggest a gross travesty of what is happening here. For they have not been allowed to read the full serial story of the loss of British liberties during the war. Publicity and freedom of communication by word of mouth, writing, and the printing-press, are the essential guarantees of every other liberty. It is for this reason that every despotism strikes its first blow at these liberties, recognizing instructed public opinion as its most formidable foe. Now during the last twenty months a series of attacks have been made upon each of these liberties within these isles.

England is no longer what Tennyson described it,

"The land where, girt by friends or foes,
A man may speak the thing he will."

Liberty of speech and meeting, of postal and telegraphic communications, and of publication through the press, has been censored, repressed, and punished, by military and civil authorities claiming to act under the Defence of the Realm Act passed by Parliament, virtually without discussion, in September, 1914. By the terms of this Act, as interpreted by the Courts, Parliament in effect ceded to the Executive its legislative function, empowering it to make and unmake the laws of England by the operation of its unchecked will. By Administrative Orders of the Privy Council, or other departments of the Executive, numerous invasions upon the legal and customary rights of the subject have been made, new offences have been created, new tribunals set up, and new modes of punishment brought into operation. How far these powers are constitutional or expedient is a question for later consideration. It is necessary in the first place to show by concrete examples what these powers are, and how they are exercised.

Beginning with freedom of speech, the basis of all moral and political liberty, we are confronted with a strict censorship of print and writing exercised by the Military and Naval authorities, the Press Bureau, and the Post Office. The ostensible and legitimate object of the censorship has been to keep from the enemy information likely to be serviceable to him. For this purpose it was necessary to stop or delay the communication to the public, or even to private individuals, of certain sorts of news. This legitimate restraint, however, has been stretched injuriously in several directions. It has been

used habitually to keep our people ignorant of important facts known to be within the knowledge of the enemy. The classical instance of such concealment was the suppression of the loss of a certain warship long after the news had been published in America and Germany. But the whole history of our military operations upon the Continent is rife with this injurious economy of truth. Not "How much *must* we conceal?" but "How little *need* we reveal?" has been the guiding principle. Thus our people have been robbed of important and salutary truths which they had a right to know, and the communication of which was essential to enable them to play their part as responsible citizens in the efforts and sacrifices they were called upon to make.

Another improper extension of the censorship applies to the stoppage or falsification of news relating to events in this country that have no direct bearing on military or naval operations. The press has repeatedly been forbidden to receive or to publish facts relating to strikes or other labor troubles in munition areas. This policy of repression is particularly foolish. The consideration that, by heartening the enemy, it will materially assist him in the war, must be set against the atmosphere of suspicion and alarm created among our people when, as is inevitably the case, exaggerated rumors are afloat about the country, nourished by this very policy of secrecy. The matter is made worse when false or "selected" information is officially substituted for the truth. A leading case of this is furnished by the "official" report of Mr. Lloyd George's meeting with the Clyde workmen at Glasgow, followed by the seizure of the local paper "Forward," which contained a substantially correct version of the episode.

The Ministerial attitude, taken in conjunction with other instances of prosecution under the Defence of the Realm Act, shows that the undertaking given by Sir John Simon in the House of Commons, that the powers of Censorship claimed under the Act would not be applied to repress expressions of opinion, has not been kept. Partly by the authoritative "advice" of the Press Bureau, partly by prosecutions under the Act, partly by the acts of local authorities, partly by mob-law connived at and condoned by Ministerial and other authority, the utterance of unpopular opinions on public affairs in the press, in public meetings, or even in private conversation, has been suppressed. Every sort of legal and illegal force has been applied for the prohibition or the breaking-up of meetings held by societies existing for the education of public opinion upon peace, international settlement, or conscription. All these societies are denounced by a certain section of the press as unpatriotic, the public is incited to violent interruption, local authorities refuse the use of public halls, the police bring pressure to close private halls against them. In several instances organized bodies of soldiers have been used to break up meetings. The most scandalous example of this attack upon free speech was the break-up of the meeting of the Union of Democratic Control at the Memorial Hall at the end of last November, the result of a carefully organized conspiracy on the part of the anti-German Union and certain organs of the London Press—in particular, the "Daily Express," whose editor, Mr. Blumenfeld, has been distinguished for this sort of patriotism. The most sinister feature of this episode was the introduction of soldiers into the hall by means of forged tickets, and the defence of this action of the military by the Under Secretary for War. The War Office, for some reason quite unexplained, had sent down a representative to attend this meeting, whose report was one tissue of misrepresentations. In his speech incor-

porating this false report, Mr. Tennant concluded with words that breathe the very spirit of Zaborn:—

"I had to back up the military, whom I hope I shall never desert in any matter of this kind when any allegation is brought against them."

Whether the allegation be true or false, is apparently a matter of official indifference!

The Defence of the Realm Act has been freely applied to repress and punish individual expressions of opinion. Men have been haled before magistrates for unsound views about the war. A laborer discovered in the act of writing a Tolstoyan tract in a common lodging-house received a sentence of three months' imprisonment for this heinous offence. The several seizures of pamphlets and other literature issued by the Labor Press Bureau were admittedly directed to the suppression of opinion. Mr. Fenner Brockway's play "The Devil's Business," a dramatic rendering of the part played by the armaments trades in the making of modern wars, contained no information likely to assist the enemy. It expressed no opinions unfavorable to our cause in this war. But its entire innocence did not save it from seizure and destruction by the police. Various pamphlets discussing the origins of the war and arguing the case against Britain's participation in it, have been confiscated and suppressed. For venting anti-war sentiments in conversation at a military hospital, a Socialist member of the Sheffield Board of Guardians was sentenced (August 6th, 1915) to two months' imprisonment by the City Bench. To state the general case against recruiting, or to criticize the special method of Lord Derby's scheme, became a recognized offence under the Defence of the Realm Act.

These instances suffice to show that the suppression of free speech and publication is by no means confined to cases of information likely to be serviceable to the enemy, or otherwise to imperil the "Defence of the Realm." Arguments and opinions upon the origin and conduct of the war, our relations with our Allies, the duty of neutrals, the policy of voluntary or of compulsory service, have become penal offences. If it be contended that such arguments or expressions of opinion do in point of fact weaken the "defences of the realm" by sapping national unity, there are three replies: First, that an explicit promise was given by the Home Secretary that the Act should not in fact be used to cover such cases. Secondly, that a consistent application of the Act in this sense would closure all discussions of public policy, whether in Parliament or in the Press, in which any difference of opinion might be disclosed. Thirdly, that the unity or solidarity of the national mind produced by suppression of free discussion is not a source of strength. For a national sentiment or policy not exposed to free criticism loses self-confidence, and fails in moral energy.

J. A. HOBSON.

A London Diary.

LONDON, FRIDAY.

WE are still at war, though no one who listened to some politicians and read some newspapers would think so. In those circles, the war without is never for a moment allowed to interrupt the war within. Its conductors are for their old prey, and until the end of this week they imagined they had it. Sir Edward Carson's

motion represents the great artillery preparation. But a following intensive attack was to come from within the Government, and Mr. Bonar Law was looked to as the General in charge of it. I don't know what form was to be given to the strategy which the public would be invited to approve; but I am quite certain of its governing motive. That was not the condition of the Army or the nation so much as the much more parlous state of the soul and body of the Unionist Party under Sir Edward Carson's manipulation of them. That happens to create a hard situation for Mr. Bonar Law. He has always been obsessed by the Carsonite legend—a highly fragile fiction when Sir Edward's character and record are taken into account. He sees, or may think he sees, the leadership being wrested from him. What is he to do? There are good men, men of character and knowledge, who hate this intriguing spirit, and will stand by the Coalition. To them Mr. Law can resort, and hold his party, and therefore the Government, together.

BUT will he? Mr. Law has some excellent Parliamentary qualities, and he is neither a violent nor a thoughtless politician. But he is of no great enduring quality, and if, for the second time, he is tempted to put the pistol to the Prime Minister's head, it is not a natural firmness of mind that will hold him back. "*Se soumettre ou se démettre*" is indeed the only possible formula of such an attitude. Expanded and applied to the situation as it existed about the middle of the week, it meant practically this: "Either, Mr. Asquith, you give us conscription all round, or you can go, and leave us to form a Unionist Government, or we go not into a friendly but an unfriendly Opposition, and you can then fight us, or test the country on the question, as you please."

SUCH a manœuvre naturally repeated the earlier operation which brought about the Conscription of the single men, in that its first diplomatic advance was an attempt to capture Mr. Henderson. The question is how far it has succeeded. Mr. Henderson's pledge to his Labor constituents is absolute, and in face of the results of the existing essay in Conscription, it cannot be said with a fragment of truth that the raking in of even 150,000 good soldiers (to be put in the field at the beginning of 1917) can affect a war whose vital passages must occur in the summer or autumn of 1916. Such suggestions therefore are lures. They would never emerge from the fowler's bag if Mr. Law controlled Sir Edward Carson and Lord Northcliffe. As it is, Labor, barring the way against a measure of general Conscription, must obviously be asked to unlock the door.

BUT supposing Mr. Henderson holds? Naturally, the Liberal Party would hold, too, against a demand as to which no pledge can be alleged, and no necessity of the war. But the Prime Minister has the strongest position of all. He has by far the ablest section of the Cabinet. If Mr. Law (who might not be joined by Lord Lansdowne) goes, the Government can, for purposes of administration, at once be strengthened, especially on the Labor side, so that in the process it could be given not less but more of a really national character. As for the party in Parliament and the country, the Prime Minister, with Sir Edward Grey by his side, has only to say the word. There would be a whimper from half-a-dozen negligibles; the rest would follow the call. He would be threatened with an election, i.e., with a factious Opposition. Quite possibly. He has then only

to make the larger appeal to the country and to the moderate Conservatives. And there again he can only win.

BUT I am afraid I question these heroic alternatives. Heroism is out of our politics and principles, too. As I write on Friday morning, I hear that the crisis is passing, as usual, into the form of a compromise, which will yield something of the blackmail which the exigencies of the Law-Carson situation require. The Cabinet Committee on recruiting seems to have got its report through the main body, and it cannot, I imagine, have disclosed any great possibilities for a compulsory "combing" out (loathsome word, as if the men of this country were vermin!) of the married men. I imagine that 200,000 would be a very outside estimate, from which large deductions would have to be made. So the Cabinet are probably turning elsewhere. It has looked in the direction of the boys of England, who may now be drafted compulsorily as they reach the age of eighteen. If this is the compromise, I can only describe it as a singularly base and cowardly one. It will, of course, be bitterly opposed, for this most dangerous view of conscription was fought and defeated when the Bill was before the House. If it is presented, it will further divide the nation, splitting the Labor Party, and depleting the poor little that is left of Liberal feeling.

MR. JOHN RUNCIMAN's death recalls many memories of his work as the musical critic of the old "Chronicle" and "Saturday." No man dealt stronger blows at the weaker idols of the music-market in England, or strove more in his savage, sincere fashion, to build a better worship. A fine musician and organist, he was also one of the half-dozen men who (Bernard Shaw leading on) could not restrain their contempt for the primitive standards that prevailed with us in the days when even Wagner was miles above the average man's musical thought and enjoyment. Runciman delighted in doing every kind of rough pioneering work (among his many attainments, he was an extremely discriminating critic of Wagner), and his weapon was a wonderful command of comminatory English. A little more measure and less temper, and he would have been the first musical critic of his day. His genius went to a certain wreck, and yet its fruits remain in the much higher and wider range of musical effort and knowledge to which this generation has attained as compared with its predecessor.

MAYFAIR is usually an organization for the propagation of malicious nonsense, but I have rarely known it so silly and so scandalous as it is to-day. Here are a few of the things it says and believes in:—

1. That Lord Haldane's son has been shot as a spy.
2. That Miss Asquith is engaged to the son of Count Zeppelin.
3. That Mr. Asquith has Sir Edgar Speyer to dinner every night, and shows him the private telegrams, which "of course" Sir Edgar telegraphs at once to Germany.
4. That "of course" Mrs. McKenna is German, and that is why she is so fond of German music.
5. That "The Alkali Company," of which Mr. Gerald Balfour is chairman, has made millions selling chemicals to the Germans.

Add some precious items of information, such as that "of course" the "Queen Elizabeth" has been sunk, and some equally priceless comment on affairs such as "Why the 'Globe' paid up I can't think, because of course it was all true."

A WAYFARER.

Life and Letters.

"WITH HARNESS ON MY BACK."

If the child is father to the man, what heart does not still leap up at beholding those mounted sentries who watch the Horse Guard gates? Fashions are born and perish; hats, skirts, and trousers broaden down or shrink again; in rhythm with the fashions Parties rise and fall; mobs furiously rage, imagining vain things; coronation follows funeral, and again a funeral comes; war obliterates the definitions of mankind; but there those sentries sit immovable, the silent emblems of eternity. Polished long boots, speckless white breeches and gauntlets to match, tunics of brilliant scarlet or dark blue (once shamefully called "Prussian"), gleaming accoutrements, swords, chains, and stirrups—there they sit for ever, astride upon horses which, in defiance of war economies and the utilitarian materialism that should make them of wood, still remain creatures of flesh and blood like ourselves. There they sit astride, and over their tunics are fastened breastplates resplendent as mirrors, and from their sunlit helmets sprout plumes beyond the dreams of woman.

Unchanging emblems of eternity, they sit for the permanence of our country and of mankind. It is the armor that does it. Chiefly it is the glimpse of armor which makes our hearts leap up when we behold them. By those shining breastplates and helms, all manner of dim instincts and race-memories are stirred. Though our roads may be alive with trailing serpents in khaki, there is no child but pictures the soldier first as naturally panoplied in steel, and for once the Kaiser was wise in his psychology when he appealed to his people (long the toy-makers of Europe) with phrases about mailed fist and shining armor. He was wise as our own Prime Minister is wise when every six months of the war he repeats that, until certain objects are accomplished, we will never sheathe the sword—that most obsolete of all existing weapons, which no one now thinks of sheathing or unsheathing or girding on, except in the play time of reviews. Wise, too, are the Generals of France by whose orders the splendid Cuirassiers still trample the Flemish mud or stir clouds of dust along the Lembet road from Salonika, equipped with old cuirass and helmet and black horsehair plume, so long that it must be tied round the middle as a girl ties her long hair with ribbon lest it should stream about dishevelled. True that, in mere concession to safety, the cuirass is browned like rust, and a cloth cover conceals the brilliance of the helm. But at sight of those glorious figures, who does not behold the plains of Austerlitz or Jena's plateau, and hear again the shout of "Vive l'Empereur!" as the cavalry thunders and surges to the front of battle, with Murat at their head?

And now time is at its old trick of looping the loop, and the science which banished armor, except for symbolic grandeur, is bringing armor back into the field of blood. Those painfully efficient Germans have never abandoned the protecting helmet with metal bands. For many months past the French armorers have been turning out casques of painted steel, covering the head all over with a smooth and rounded surface, as a dish-cover protects the roast. We are following the example ourselves, and in place of Scottish bonnets, or "Gorblimé" caps, or the stiff cloth hats whose flat surfaces are conspicuous at a distance as glazed pudding-plates, we are gradually guarding our soldiers' skulls with steel helmets, round-topped and flat-brimmed. For a guinea one can secure the best quality—a helmet that

will stick on without the encumbrance of straps like bonnet-strings, and is strengthened by scientific corrugation, like the armor of the Tudor age. No mail or plate or corrugated steel will bar the flight of bullet or ball, as our ancestors discovered with alarm and indignation when the hand-cannon (a brass tube with an orifice for fire at one end), the wheel-lock, the match-lock, the culverin, the saker, the minion, and the drake began to pierce ugly holes in the most artistically inlaid breast-plates and helmets that Spanish armorers could design. But all who have heard the crash of shrapnel overhead, the scream of the deadly cone as it scatters, or even the whine of passing bullets, know how small an obstacle can make the immeasurable difference between a wound and death.

Even the cuirass, which practical Cromwell abolished for his cavalry at last, though Charles, the *dilettante*, tried hard to keep it as a pretty thing, may re-appear in these entrenchment days. Already one sees signs of it in the khaki "life-saving" pad, advertized as proof against shrapnel and bullet. The iron plate or shield is usual now on guns, common at the observation posts in all trenches, and might very well be carried about by chosen observers, if it had a small hole in the middle for the eye. Protected by khaki breastplate, shield, and round steel helmet, over which he would on occasion draw his goggle-eyed shroud or veil to avert the poison-gas, the soldier of the trenches will then present an unaccustomed appearance, not much resembling the dashing white sergeant of the Victorian nursemaid's joy. But for practical purposes—for all except artistic beauty—he will not be so far removed from those medieval warriors who advanced against the foe protected by bacinets upon their heads, avantailles or visors before their faces, and coats of intertwined rings or plated leather over their bodies, sheltered from the sun's heat by linen shifts, and further strengthened by ailettes, vambraces, and rerebraces for the arms, mamelières for the chest, tuiettes for the waist, cuisses for the thighs, greaves and sabatgynes for the shins and feet. If cavalry should ever move again, and horses also be equipped with armor, corresponding to the chanfron, monœfaire, and poitral of picturesque ages, one fears they will not be truly thankful for what they are about to receive.

At the present, certainly, our armored fighter in the trenches might look a little grotesque, like the liner's passengers who parade the decks encased in safety waist-coats, with a ship's life-belt on the top. But appearance is mainly a matter of habit; the useful may sometimes be beautiful, and one can imagine our workers at arts and crafts soon beginning to decorate the surface of our armor in their artful and crafty way. They will render our steel hats so terrific with ornament that the officer's baby, saying good-bye at Victoria, will cry at the sight of father's crest, as Hector's baby cried in Troy. They will make our breastplates as fine as the thorax which Homeric Greeks valued at four oxen or a clever needle-woman. And upon the compartments of our shields, as upon the shield of Achilles, they will emboss familiar scenes of national life—a wedding in Hanover Square, and the women marvelling around; the House of Commons, and the Opposition uttering ironic cheers; a pheasant battue, and a grouse-moor, with keepers loading guns; a football match, with spectators yelling; and a fancy-dress "rag" at Covent Garden. The shield of Achilles shone like the moon, or like a comfortable farmhouse fire which storm-tossed sailors see far off; but our shields must not shine.

There are other signs, moreover, of return to medieval, classic, and even earlier ages. Men now rush to the attack of trenches armed with dagger, knife, and

skull-cracking mace. A catapult with rubber strands, on the same principle as the Roman catapult, is used for lobbing bombs. Another step will restore the catapult or ballista by which the Middle Ages hurled the trussed-up carcass of a horse or man over an enemy's walls, hoping thereby to breed a pestilence, or flung an envoy's head back to the enemy's quarters, with the suggested terms attached by a nail as sufficient notice of rejection. Opposing trenches at a few yards' distance now chuck bombs at each other by hand—cricket-ball bombs, jam-tin bombs, oblong bombs like bricks on a frame, or segment bombs with a safety catch to secure the thrower. Already we hear of an Austrian gun which throws stones for shrapnel, and if the war is to continue (in Mr. Bernard Shaw's phrase) as a perpetual Chamber of Horrors, mere want of money and labor will presently reduce civilized nations to throwing stones at each other by hand. Long-bow and cross-bow will again be manufactured, and the more carefully fashioned stones will be made recoverable by thongs attached. Dip a little further into the future, and you may see the impoverished and scanty races of man slaughtering each other with logs and the thigh-bones of the ox. A little further still, and they are tearing each other's flesh with mouth and fingers—fighting tooth and nail, as we still say in memory of good old times. But before that Chamber of Horrors is open every day (Sundays included) for any future generation, let us hope that France and Flanders, and Germany as well, will have beaten their barbed wire into hen-runs, and of our steely armored hats have made "marmites" to boil the midday soup, recalling no memory of "Jack Johnsons" and the black smoke of sudden death.

THE TRIBUNAL.

THERE is something baffling to the modern mind in the notion of a tribunal to try conscience. What tests shall it apply, and by what magic shall it pierce into the secret places of the heart? We can guess how the Middle Ages would have solved the problem. They would have given the claimant a bar of red-hot iron to grasp in his hand, or flung him into water like a witch to sink or swim. For the Middle Ages eccentricity was always something magical, and this attitude implied a sort of inverted respect which we miss in our modern tribunals. There was one modern judge who might have revelled in the problem. Dostoevsky's examining magistrate in "Crime and Punishment," the subtle gentleman who had made a special study of psychology, might have known how to face it. He would have sat down beside his victim, lured him into talk, and bared his mind in half-an-hour's Socratic dialogue. The Appeal Tribunal at the Guildhall suffered from no original inspirations. It conducted its proceedings drily, and with mechanical decorum. It might have been a police-court dealing with minor offences against order, or a group of revising barristers deciding on technical grounds a claim to a vote. The clerk read out the appellant's statements of claim in a clear monotonous voice, and the phrases in which these young men described their deepest convictions seemed to lose all meaning in that atmosphere of formality. We found ourselves wondering whether if St. Francis himself had condensed his gospel of love into a statement of claim, it would have sounded impressive in the tones of a justice's clerk. Some of these confessions of faith were an echo of the Sermon on the Mount, and some might have come from the wild eloquence of Gustave Hervé in the days when he preached a proletarian strike against war. They fluttered feebly in that close place like a lark that had

strayed into Cheapside. The tribunal was courteous and attentive, and there was only one of its five members who insisted on putting the stock conundrums "Would you as soon be a German as an Englishman?" or "What would you do if a German attacked your mother?" His fellows seemed a little bored by his inept taste for disputation, and confined themselves to such chance openings as each case revealed for probing the applicant's sincerity. It was a curiously abstract and unreal performance. The applicant sat with his back to the audience, and it was sometimes only the tone of his voice that gave any clue to his personality. What dreams and studies, one wondered, lay concealed under that quiet and shy demeanor? One young man had obviously steeped himself in Tolstoy, and another declared himself the devoted disciple of Mr. Lansbury. Their idealism spoke, for the most part, in simple tongue-tied sentences, but clearly it was a faith that had resisted social pressure, and the weight of their environment. They were all aware that on the morrow it might have to stand the test of prison.

The first case brought into the court a refined and exceptional personality. There is something in Mr. Clifford Allen's demeanor, which explains at once his ascendancy over these young men and his leadership in their movement. His is a rare type of strength which comes from a clear-cut mind and self-possession of a single purpose. Nature, too, has given him the dignity of manner and the clear, trenchant speech, which extort respect even for an uncompromising policy. His statement of claim was worded so simply that it lost little even from the reading of the Clerk:—

"I am a Socialist, and so hold in all sincerity that the life and personality of every man is sacred, and that there is something of divinity in every human being, irrespective of the nation to which he belongs. I cannot betray my belief in the brotherhood of all men. To me, war is murder, and will only become impossible when an increasing number of those who share this conviction remain true to their belief, and refuse to take part in warfare, whatever be the pretext for which it is waged. I never have and never will shirk my bounden duty to serve my fellow men. At present, I believe I can best render such service by striving to advance the cause of peace."

The Battersea Tribunal had refused his appeal on the singular ground "that his objection seemed to be against military service itself," which was exactly the state of the case. It imagined that it had detected him in insincerity, because he had confessed that he smokes, and thereby contributes to the revenue. The Guildhall Tribunal was above that abysmal level of silliness, and the only issue which it debated seriously was Major Rothschild's claim that a conscientious objection is necessarily an objection on religious grounds. He returned to the charge again and again, with a suave pachydermatous obstinacy in case after case. He provoked the audience, and in the end even the Bench, to a show of impatience, and gained nothing for his pains, for the Court in its afternoon's work granted more exemptions to Socialist "objectors" than to Christians. Mr. Allen answered the military representative's rambling objections in a few terse sentences, and then after a few moments for consultation, the Chairman gave the decision—exemption, conditional on undertaking work of "national importance."

It was no doubt a tolerant sentence as the Court conceived it, and it marked the immense gulf in comprehension between the Local and the Appeal Tribunal. But its practical effect will be the same. Mr. Allen took his stand on the most extreme logic of the opponent of the war who realizes that any form of alternative service laid down by a Govern-

ment at war, will indirectly further the prosecution of the war. He refused the concession, and declared that the only "work of national importance" which he would undertake was agitation on behalf of peace. The military representative rose to claim the body which had not so much fallen as leaped into his net. The Court, obviously respectful towards the victim, and anxious to avoid extreme courses, interposed a month's delay. It was a well-meant effort of conciliation, but he would be a poor judge of character who would expect this resolute will to flinch after a month's reflection.

Then followed a procession of "conscientious objectors," all of them young, and all of them belonging to the skilled artisan or clerk class. One very young and freshly colored lad, with a shy and gentle face, claimed exemption as a Christian. He was a Wesleyan Methodist, whose exceptional pacifism in a Church little given to such views had caused the local tribunal to dismiss his case. He hardly spoke, but relied on some eighteen letters, which testified to his character, and his evident zeal in living a Christian life as he understood it. The minister of his church, while careful to state that "of course" he did not share his views, was able to certify that he held and declared them long before Conscription was expected. That was good evidence, and it saved him. He, too, was ordered to perform "work of national importance," and probably that concession would meet his case.

The Socialists who followed him were clearly of a different race. It was no lack of the combative instincts that had led to their adoption of pacifism. One stalwart lad answered rather quaintly that he knew ju-jitsu when the disputatious member of the bench asked the usual question about his mother, but even he was certain that he would not kill. Another who had often spoken at street corners against war, seemed a little embarrassed when the Major asked an unpleasant question about violence during strikes. No one who saw the hearing of these young Socialist "objectors" could imagine for a moment that physical cowardice had anything to do with their opposition to war. One of them offered as the proof of the sincerity of his conviction that he had been dismissed from his employment for his refusal to attest, and his claim, after some cross-examination on the facts, was allowed—though with the usual reservation. Another who was an engineer's draftsman, confessed that he had not thrown up his job when his firm became a "controlled establishment" and made munitions. His appeal was promptly dismissed, and the decision seemed just. It was quite otherwise, however, with a Socialist postman. His evidence was clear; he could show that his views had been held for some time, and his prospects seemed good, when suddenly the Tribunal was moved to ask whether, in sorting letters and parcels, he had not sometimes handled letters to soldiers at the front. He admitted it, and the fatal sentence followed promptly. It was a harsh and childish decision. Surely the most rigid pacifist might not merely handle but himself send letters and comforts to soldiers at the front, as even a neutral may do. Two Irish Nationalists, habitually resident in England, met with a like fate. One of them professed pacifist as well as Nationalist views, but it was clear that the real root of their repugnance was an ultra-nationalist indifference to the British Empire and its fate. The Act had not expressly provided for such cases, but as they were ordered to the combatant ranks, were collected a properly vehement letter in which Professor Gilbert Murray denounced the moral brutality of Prussian Militarism, which sends Danes from Schleswig to fight for the German Empire. Conscription will always create such brutalities

as this, and the case of these two Irishmen was not more revolting than that of the two young men of German parentage who pleaded in vain before another tribunal that they had a "conscientious objection" to slaying their own kinsmen.

The Guildhall Tribunal was an unusually favorable instance of these courts. It was polite, and save in the postman's case, it was fair. It did not bully or insult, as so many of them have done. It did not dispute a Socialist's right to a conscience. But it was, like most of them, serenely indifferent to the fact that the Act allows an absolute exemption for conscience' sake. We should judge, so far as a hasty glance can gauge character, that in two or three cases that afternoon it provided a compromise which will not conflict with the applicant's sense of honor and duty. In two or three of the other cases it might as well have dismissed the appeal, and sent the applicant at once to prison. A man of an individualist outlook, especially if his standpoint is religious, may be satisfied if he does not himself stain his hands with blood. But a Socialist, who is thinking of war as a social evil which he must combat, will as naturally, if he is young and ardent, follow the strict logic that refuses alternative service. Already some of these young men have faced the consequences of their decision, and among them are scores or hundreds who would have been free if they had chanced to come before one of the more reasonable tribunals. The usual course, after a day or two's passive disobedience to all orders in the regiment, is a court-martial and a six months' or two years' sentence of imprisonment with hard labor. They will face it, we dare say, with fortitude, for it is their act of protest against war. We who look on feel less stoical. The more an idealist proves by his steadiness and courage that his faith will prompt him to face penalties, the more does the community lose in toleration and dignity which insists upon inflicting them.

SIXES AND SEVENS.

THERE is a dreadful tangle of rose stems that in former years has been left to the last at pruning-time and thus overlooked in the end. It resembles a head of long hair between washing and combing, but it is a head of barbed wire instead of hair. This year a determined young woman undertook its treatment. It meant a good deal of pain and bloodshed, "but women never heed scratches or pin-pricks." It is the old-fashioned, rule-of-thumb jobbing gardener who talks about the rose-thorns and the harm they do whilst he interrupts work to mop his brow. The determined young woman snips and bleeds, hauls out a barrow-load of thorns, and says, "I am glad I undertook this one; it is so satisfactory to see that one has been able to do some good in helping the poor plant to get air and sunlight."

That from a page of Viscountess Wolseley's chatty book "In a College Garden" (Murray). On the other hand, a farmer before a Conscription Tribunal the other day said that women were no good to him because they stayed away from work on wet days. The rejoinder to that is that women's clothes are wretchedly ill-adapted for work among wet crops. In knickers and gaiters, with oilskins and sou'-wester hats, the students at Glynde College of Gardening really enjoy the rain; it is the male demonstrator who wants to adjourn to the potting-shed when the wet begins to come through his broadcloth. Here, as in many other fields, the heel of a coming gynocracy threatens us.

We have heard a good deal about dilution of labor in munition works. Even when it takes the form of

letting in women in the place of unskilled men, the hereditary bread-winners in the higher branches of engineering do not like it. But what has "the old-fashioned, rule-of-thumb jobbing gardener" to say to the dilution that such colleges as that of Viscountess Wolseley are bringing about? The "inartistic," &c., &c., man-gardener, "whom we have tolerated for so long," is to be abolished and his place taken by "intelligent, educated ladies, who will direct and supervise . . . even better than the very best type of male gardener, . . . the man capable of directing from ten to twenty under-gardeners, well read and acquainted with science."

Why not? Men and women are at least equal in intellect (the sentence just quoted seems to establish more than that). Men are undoubtedly endowed with more brawn. What juster or wiser distribution of work could there be than that the strong ones should perfect by training their natural digging powers, and that those merely intelligent should acquire science in order to direct them? The proposal will not appear very revolutionary to anyone who looks at the matter from Viscountess Wolseley's angle. The skilled gardener of the past, the man who, though rule-of-thumb and inartistic, was well read and acquainted with science, was not (so we are allowed to presume) a gentleman. He was of the same class as the men he directed. But the director of the future, she whose foot is already firm in dozens of "our largest English private gardens," is to be the daughter of an Army or Navy officer.

A recent letter in a daily paper setting forth the advantages of gardening as a profession for ladies brought no fewer than three hundred replies, but, alas! only twenty of the writers were able to afford the expenses of training. Lady Wolseley says she believes that in some foreign countries, such as Denmark and Holland, women are given liberal education which enables them to do justice to their calling. The Government of neither country, we think, gives anything at all commensurate with the course that young ladies get at Glynde. The winter courses on agriculture and horticulture in Holland cost the recipients a few shillings, and are subsidized to the extent of about 3s. per head. These lectures are given at night to farmers, gardeners, and workmen who have been earning their living by day. They help to make rather good agriculturists of the Dutch.

It is like talking at cross-purposes to compare the self-education of the Dutch with the no doubt excellent work of an entirely different character that goes on at Glynde and similar institutions. It is not our fault. Lady Wolseley's pages are full of a rather vague yearning for something that the reader will feel is better and larger than the training of lady gardeners to adorn the pleasures of the rich. On the one hand, she will not have even the daughter of a head-gardener at her college. "The somewhat rough-mannered, undisciplined middle-class woman, who in early days emerged as gardener from some of the training centres," must be left to milk cows and look after poultry and bees. It is inconceivable that she could ever have watched over "fragile, tender little plants." On the other hand, Lady Wolseley recognizes her part in a larger world by belonging to the Committee of the Glynde and District Federation of Growers. A fellow-member is Henry Vincent, who has made £52 in a year from his half-acre of spaded garden.

The war has brought the clamor of humanity into the College garden itself. As much land as possible has been given up to vegetables, and as the men have enlisted, the entire culture is undertaken by the ladies. They take

out their produce on a trolley, and sell it from door to door, one on a bicycle flying home for more of the particular vegetable that is from time to time in danger of getting sold out. The immense superiority of food fresh from the garden over that which may have lain for days in transit and at the greengrocer's is seen at once, and one wonders how long it would be, if the practice should be continued and widely imitated, before the vegetable round became as universal as the milk round. In towns a hundred miles from Glynde, we have seen ladies in the same neat costume delivering vegetables from a natty pony-cart. Whether they were daughters of Navy officers we could not determine, but they seemed as though they meant to go on with their business, which they started before the war began.

A lady has lately been to Glynde to talk to the students about the Women's Institutes of Canada. Wherever a lady gardener is, there ought to be a "Home-makers' Club" on this Canadian model. Women from every home in the village will exchange knowledge and thoughts. They will learn how, by labor-saving expedients, to save valuable hours from housework, how to improve live stock and garden crops, how to market better as sellers and buyers, how to improve co-operatively the life of the village, and make the country lot more attractive against the pull of the towns. Concerts, village socials, lectures with discussions shall break down the cottage clans, and even make the summer residence of the rich a little less of an island in a hostile sea.

We are glad to hear that the lecturer's words fell warmly on the young hearts at Glynde, and that each student is to be a beacon lamp in some such national movement as the Women's Institutes of Canada. "Social conditions are simpler in Canada than with us," laments Lady Wolseley. A Russian visitor told us the other day that his country is socially more democratic than ours. Australians here on the business of the Empire tell us with the friendly frankness of kinship that we are snobs. Yet we think that the war has made us quite free and easy. The Brotherhood of the Trench is to make a lasting difference. The Sisterhood of the Factory, the Hospital, and the Sewing Circle can become mighty allies in the same work, the welding of all classes into one, single-eyed for all that is good for our land and for humanity.

Letters to the Editor.

A SEPARATE PEACE WITH TURKEY.

To the Editor of THE NATION.

SIR,—I have read with no little amazement M. Jean Longuet's letter in one of your last issues. M. Longuet has, it seems, volunteered as the advocate of a separate peace with Turkey, and I sincerely admire his courage for revealing his sympathies. But does he think the moment is well chosen for such a proposal? Are we to come to Prussia's rescue when her feeblest slave is giving out? Are we to prop up this crumbling corpse and allow it to infect the next fifty years of European history as it has done for the last fifty till the stink brought on the present plague? More so, to quote M. Longuet's own words, when the Turks "are feeling not a little proud, and even boastful," after "the failure of the Franco-English Expedition to force the Dardanelles," are France and England going to bow to their tottering victor? But a still more cogent question should be put to M. Longuet: Are we to rehabilitate, as a civilized Power, in the slightest degree the Government, Army and Tribal hordes which have recently butchered one million Armenians out of two

millions, under the leadership of the German despots, under the command of German officers, and with the applause of the German press? Can nations come to terms with savages, whether Turk or German? Of what ultimate behoof would it be to bequeath to Russia the Armenian cemetery, according to M. Longuet's suggestion, if we are to leave elsewhere the grim gravedigger at his work? Indeed, one wonders whether M. Longuet is at all acquainted with the history of Turkish oppression in Europe since the fourteenth century. Serbian refugees might teach it to him.

If we now turn to consider the position of our Russian Ally after that of Turkey, does M. Longuet think that the Russia of the Duma and Zemstvos, the Russia of Kropotkin and Burtseff, which is waging this war of liberation, deserves the unseemly offence which he proposes should be given her? Shall this, then, be our acknowledgment for the superb stubbornness with which she has borne the deadliest brunt of the war? Is this the time to enforce an unpleasant policy upon her, when her territory is invaded to a wider extent than that of France, and to discourage her efforts when she has overcome her trials and made such headway in Asia Minor as to relieve our anxieties on the Western Front? Surely M. Longuet does not realize that a separate peace between the Allies and Turkey might prove the stepping-stone to a separate peace between Germany and Russia. What is M. Longuet driving at? Are we to surmise that the secret object of his murmurings is to bring about a clamor for peace, as his friends of the "Herald" openly advertize? First, a separate peace with Turkey, then another such peace with Bulgaria, then still another such one with Austria—in fact, a sequel of piecemeal peace with all the subsequent mates of Germany, till the series of our lenient conditions have done away with all our positive claims, and left us devoid of all our weapons when we come to deal with the monster himself!

M. Longuet further inquires "whether France and England have a foreign policy in Turkey." May we be admitted to ask him whether he and the German Socialists whom he went to meet in Switzerland, as we were informed by the French Socialist Congress, have a common policy in Turkey and in the rest of the world? When M. Longuet goes on to say that "the whole of the Balkan States would see Russia with dismay and regret" laying her hand on the key of the Bosphorus, may we ask him if he alludes to Bulgaria as deserving any consideration on our part after her dastardly stabbing of Serbia, or to Greece after the slackness of her pro-German officials in backing the cause she was pledged to, or, lastly, to Serbia and Rumania who hold up no claim at all, to our knowledge, to Constantinople? Perhaps M. Longuet is in fear lest we give umbrage to Montenegro. The logical conclusion of his scheme seems that the Russian and Allied ships would, after the war, continue to cross the Dardanelles under the control of German gunners disguised in Turkish uniforms, and that Syria, Mesopotamia, and Asia Minor, once rent from the grasp of naughty France, England, and Italy, should be benevolently handed over to the good old Germanic hegemony, which is Germany's primary goal in this war. Thus through the dereliction of Russia, German Socialists being placated, and the German Kaiser through his Socialists being tamed down to moderate terms, Germany would have lost the battle, and yet through our kindness gained the booty.

True it is that M. Longuet's one object is that the war should come to an "end." Nor does he allow any circumstances to pass by without making this object plain and practical by advising the Allies to deprive themselves of the very means to carry on the war, as when of late in one of our French papers he rose in anger against British conscription, leaving it to his countrymen, under the yoke of their Republican and commonplace régime to go on doing more than "their bit."

To conclude, Englishmen had, perhaps better not trust the "Herald" when it hints that M. Longuet is speaking in the name of "Frenchmen." He is merely whispering on behalf of a phantom minority who do not make bold to speak loud and to unfold their programme at full length. Frenchmen, and French democrats foremost, take a different view of the crisis: they are not craving for the "end of the war," however ghastly the war may be, but fighting for the end of Prussia—that is, fighting for victory of all the Allies

over all the Prussified devils; victory wholesale, not piecemeal; victory of the one great cause. Perhaps M. Longuet will agree that this also would mean the end of the war, and of some few more wars besides.—Yours, &c.,

PAUL HYACINTHE LOYSON.
(Former Editor of "Les Droits de l'Homme.")

THE CONSCRIPTION INTRIGUE.

To the Editor of THE NATION.

SIR,—It has become pertinent to ask why the great newspaper Trusts should again be showing their fervent patriotic zeal by raising the question of "Compulsion for all" as a "measure of justice," and why from various sources such serious warnings should be conveyed that a shortage of men is imminent, or, at least, is greatly to be feared later in the year. The well-informed London correspondent of the "Liverpool Courier" tells us (April 11th) that the War Office has at present as many men as it can train; but the political correspondents of papers like the "Times" are equally insistent with regard to the alleged shortage "in the autumn." It stands to reason that if the eligible male population of military age is used up uneconomically—as competent military critics, with the permission of the Censor, say is the case—a shortage of men is only a question of time. It was to economize our man-power by the use of countless shells that so much support was lent to Mr. Lloyd George when he asked not long ago for 80,000 skilled and 200,000 unskilled munition workers. These 280,000 men, if the requirements of the Ministry of Munitions were adequately supplied—hardly represent more than a tenth part of the number actually engaged in making war supplies. There are necessarily thousands of men of military age among them who are still unkindly jeered at as "shirkers," despite Mr. Long's recent commonsense statement that we must have not only men to fight, but also munitions for them to fight with. The directors of the Northcliffe Press would be satisfied to see "everything that can walk" in the trenches of Flanders, Salonika, and Mesopotamia, let their munitions, stores, clothing, &c., and the supplies for our Allies, come from where they might. The extreme militarists, keenly aware that there is nothing like leather, themselves ask for no more than this. But the War Office is merely one department of the Government, and it is the constitutional function of the Cabinet as a whole to reconcile the demands of a department of this nature with the needs of finance, industry, and the Navy.

The suggestion has been made that the saner members of the Cabinet, especially the Prime Minister, are being hard put to it to enforce their constitutional authority on account of the political and other influences which are supporting the more extreme military demands. On investigation, however, I think it will be found that this influence is not what its representatives try to make it out to be. Only thirty-two members of Parliament openly showed their approval of Sir F. Banbury's motion to abolish payment of members, though the newspapers had warned us beforehand that this was really a preliminary trial of strength to show the public backing which the Liberal and the Unionist War Committees could command if they chose. Backing of this sort has a habit of vanishing mysteriously in its leaders' hour of need. Mr. Asquith—and who knows better?—has doubtless realized already that both the so-called War Committees, considered as groups capable of giving practical advice, or of hindering or hustling the Government in any way, are simply contemptible.

We inevitably come back to the point raised in my first paragraph, which you were kind enough to let me raise in a different form in your issue of March 11th. It should not be beyond the capacity of the Parliamentary correspondent of a newspaper syndicate to calculate to what extent there must be a shortage of men in the field if the industrial and financial requirements of ourselves and of our Allies are to be filled, apart altogether from the question of the Navy and its maintenance. It is now cheerfully admitted even by the warmest supporters of Lord Derby (for a really flattering estimate of whose character and abilities one must consult a recent issue of the "Times War History," written before the great split) that the figures in the notorious Report were wrong. The 651,000 single men have dwindled down to about one-fifth that number of effectives—truly a negligible

quantity. Of the unattested married men the proportion would naturally be smaller. Yet it is seriously proposed that the Government should extend the Military Service (No. 2) Act to include the unattested married men.

Many Members of Parliament have already been furnished with lists of factories in the Midlands and the North which have had to suspend or curtail their production of highly essential work owing to their skilled and unskilled men having been called up. To give a typical example, one firm in Bradford, which has large contracts to execute for France, is now being sued in the French Courts for non-fulfilment of contract. The non-fulfilment was due to absence of skilled men, demanded and taken by the War Office in spite of Tribunals, our export trade, and the industrial needs of our Ally.

We are told that the Cabinet are considering our trade requirements before coming to a decision on the question of general compulsion. At least three Cabinet Ministers out of every five must know perfectly well that no further supplies of men for the Army can be secured on a large scale if our industry is not to be seriously affected, and with it the possibility of our supporting our Allies financially, and of discharging our own liabilities abroad. It would be too delicate to enter more fully into this matter; but it should be added that the enemy will ultimately be defeated by our husbanding our economic resources (which include men as an essential element). Every week that passes shows that it would be more advantageous, so far as winning the war is concerned, for the Government not to call out any further married groups, and, of course, as a corollary, not to widen the scope of the Military Service Act. We cannot afford more soldiers at the cost (according to Mr. Asquith's own statement) of £250 to £300 a year each, to which we must add the loss of their spending power and of the national revenue derived from the fairly large taxes payable by most of the attested and unattested married men. Our chief sources of power are naval, industrial, and financial, not military; and the fate of the war will finally depend on our Navy, our industry, and our finance—not on the number of men, married or single, conscripts or volunteers, we can put in the field. It lies with the Ministers who share these views—the views of every sound business man and economist—to impress them upon their colleagues in the Cabinet.—Yours, &c.,

J. M. KENNEDY.

April 13th, 1916.

A CLASH OF CONSCIENCES.

To the Editor of THE NATION.

SIR,—To the great majority of Englishmen, at this time, it seems clear that duty requires the sacrifice of everything, even life, to the cause of victory in the war. To a small minority, it seems, on the contrary, that participation in war is wicked, and that duty requires the sacrifice of everything, even life, to the cause of peace and human brotherhood.

Both sides have the same moral integrity, the same determination, the same courage. Which side has the greater insight, time will show.

Is it really necessary that the majority should continue to misunderstand the minority? For their sakes, I cannot bring myself wholly to regret the persecution to which the conscientious objectors are being subjected, for I think it is only through actual suffering that they will convince ordinary men of their inflexible courage. But for the sake of the others, the majority, the men in power, the military authorities, the clergy (with honorable exceptions), and the men above military age—for the sake of their souls, and for the sake of religious liberty, I could wish that it was not thought a mark of courage to join in the universal assault upon these few, or a mark of cowardice to stand upright against an angry nation because of a burning moral conviction.

The No-Conscription Fellowship is a spontaneous association of those who believe in the sacredness of human life and the brotherhood of man, and who are prepared to abide by this faith, even to the death. Last Saturday and Sunday, they held a large Convention, composed of delegates from all parts of Great Britain. An assembly of some 2,000, representing a scattered membership of many thousands,

gave proof, to all who saw it, of the spirit by which these young men are actuated. The public imagines the conscientious objector as a pale, anæmic, nervous youth, too lifeless and bloodless to feel the call of honor, too selfish to be willing to make sacrifices for his country. Nothing could be more unlike the reality. There were pugnacious Scotsmen, with the broad accent of Glasgow; brawny miners from the pit; impetuous Welshmen, full of Celtic fire, whom one could see in imagination leading a cavalry charge in some desperate battle of former days. From London, from the southern ports, from the Universities, even from the Northern Highlands, the delegates had been sent to the Convention. They had all the qualities of the best type of Briton: good humor, capacity for dispatching business, immense determination, and inflexible will. But, added to these things, they had something more, something more rare and more precious. Like Blake, they had seen a vision; they wished to "build Jerusalem in England's green and pleasant land." No one with any knowledge can doubt that Blake would have been with them, and Shelley; if these men were now alive, and subject to the Military Service Act (No. 2), the Tribunals would have told them to stop talking such sickening rubbish, and they would be at this moment undergoing arrest or solitary confinement in a military prison.

Let the authorities make no mistake. The men in that Convention were filled with a profound faith, and with a readiness for sacrifice at least as great as that of the soldier who dies for his country. If persecution is to be meted out to them, they will joyfully become martyrs. Public opinion is against them now, because it believes them to be "shirkers"; that stigma is in process of being removed by the military authorities. When it has been removed, public opinion will undergo a revulsion. Does the Government wish to bring about this result?

Many schemes of "alternative service" have been proposed as a possible means of compromise. But compromise is difficult for these men; if they are asked to change their occupation, they feel that it is in order to facilitate the prosecution of the war. They have a far stronger desire than most men to be of service to the community; but it is their belief that a stand for peace is the greatest service they can render to the community. For this reason every hint of compromise was rejected by the Convention with the utmost determination. Their belief may be wrong, or it may be right; but no one who has seen them can doubt that it is sincere and unshakeable. Persecution will sully the persecutors and smirch the fair fame of Britain; but it will only advance the cause for which its victims will have triumphed.—Yours, &c.,

BERTRAND RUSSELL.

April 12th, 1916.

THE LIBERTY OF THE SUBJECT.

To the Editor of THE NATION.

SIR,—The answer to the specific question you put to me in your editorial comment is that it does not appeal to me either as a lawyer or a Liberal to attempt to get the House of Lords in its judicial capacity to override the manifest intention of Parliament. I say manifest intention because it is inconceivable that, in case of liberty of the subject, Parliament would not at once intervene if the Courts had misinterpreted its intention.

In your desire to maintain liberty I am entirely with you. But liberty needs all its friends; and my object in addressing you is to suggest that liberty tends to lose support of valuable friends when they find themselves associated with people whose zeal outruns common sense.

You speak of the present system as *lettre de cachet*. If it were *lettre de cachet*, or anything like it, I should doubtless be with you in desiring alteration. As I understand it, by *lettre de cachet* the Executive seizes a person and imprisons him indefinitely, without reason assigned, and without an opportunity of putting his case before an impartial body. The system of the Order in Council involves informing the person detained with due promptitude of the grounds of his detention, and gives him a right to dispute those grounds before an impartial body. That body consists of two judges and four members of Parliament; in whom I have complete confidence, because I know that not one of them would consent to the detention of a subject without substantial

grounds. I agree at once that such a system would be unthinkable in time of peace. But when we are engaged in a struggle for life with an enemy who has honeycombed the land with spies, would it not be contrary to common sense to insist, as you apparently do, that proceedings should take place in public, and that our enemies should be informed of the steps we take to counteract their espionage?—Yours, &c.,

ARNOLD HERBERT.

The Athenæum. April 10th, 1916.

[It is inconceivable to Mr. Herbert that the House of Commons, under the circumstances of the war, which dominates its thinking, and the Coalition Government, which controls its policy and proceedings, should not rush to "intervene" on the discovery that it had inadvertently taken away a liberty of the subject. Why should it, especially if it is largely composed of lovers of liberty who desert her when they discover that other of her lovers are lacking in common sense? Mr. Herbert is hardly accurate in his distinction between the "secret order" and the *lettre de cachet*. Persons originally imprisoned under it were not informed of the cause of their detention; they may now be so informed through the modification introduced under the pressure which he deprecates. But as a matter of fact the nurse whose case has been before the public has just been informed that no such provision applies to her. We submit that no mere hearing of the Advisory Committee can be a substitute for judicial trial—that is to say, in the eyes of a man who is a lawyer, let us say, in the sense of a Mackintosh, or a "Liberal" in the sense of a John Bright. As for the issue of form Mr. Herbert again mistakes it. A proper resort to secrecy is not barred under trial by jury.—ED., NATION.]

To the Editor of THE NATION.

SIR,—There appears to be some confusion of thought on this subject. The Habeas Corpus Act was intended for the benefit of the kingdom, and the kingdom was never to be jeopardized for the sake of the Act. That being so, Parliament has never hesitated temporarily to suspend the issuing of the writ Habeas Corpus whenever, in its opinion, the exigencies of the nation required this to be done. For example, beginning with 19 George II., cap. 1, three Acts for suspending the issuing of this writ were passed in rapid succession from 1745 to 1747. These were the Acts 19 George II., cap. 17, and 20 George II., cap. 1. Again during the reign of George III., beginning with the Act 34 George III., cap. 54, in 1794, no fewer than fourteen Acts up to and including 58 George III., cap. 1, in 1817, were passed for suspending the issuing of the writ in the United Kingdom, besides two—43 George III., cap. 116, and 44 George III., cap. 4—applicable to Ireland alone. These temporary Acts were repealed as soon as the occasions for them had passed; and the liberty of the subject has never been more absolutely secure than during the last hundred years. There is thus no question of the liberty of the subject at stake, but the minor one: Have the Law Courts rightly interpreted the present Emergency Act?—Yours, &c.,

P. MORISON.

Edinburgh. April 10th, 1916.

Poetry.

WOUNDED.

My shirt is warm with blood—warm, brown, and red;
Here at the pocket hangs a pinkish gout
Shaking like jelly; from my battered head
The sticky stream drips to my very eyes,
And with each drop my life is running out;
My life, my only life is shed
With every drop, and gradually dies!
But one touch more, one little touch—no doubt
I'd be already dead.

I should lie dead upon the ground, and be
Stinking and withering to the sun and rain,
All common functions of my body still
As engines silted in the depth of sea;
No sleep, no waking, neither ease nor pain,

Hunger nor food, nor thirst nor splendid wine;
But quick corruption shrinking me up, until
This moving heart should in the dust combine
With thighs and feet and finger-bones to fill
Scarcely a bulge in the uniform again.

What if I never see a summer sun
Rise slowly glimmering on the empurpled night,
And glory through the heaven's wide marching-ground,
Till all the golden hours are done,
And over the empurpled hills one star stands white
In a green sky, and then all other stars
Leap singly from their homes, above a sea
Which heaves in white and purple lines around
Great ships with furling sails and the entanglement
of spars!

Shall I not sail a ship again, nor feel
The rudder leaping in my hand
Like a big fish, nor hear deep waters slide
Hissing in foam against the slanted keel,
Nor watch the jagged horizon show a land
Grey with the rain and cloud,
Nor when the moaning winds are loud,
Up through the storm exultant ride,
Bearing great orders, climb the mountain side,
Cross the dim watershed of plunging snow,
And see an army's braziers sparkling far below!

Bleeding I lie, but all myself is whole;
These interwoven threads of heart and brain,
All vital apparatus of the soul,
Electric nerves and thought-secreting stuff,
Visible chords charged with invisible life—
All would fulfil their purpose, and again
Pursue the wonted ways of peace or strife;
They would proceed; they rest complete enough
To labor daily, converse with a friend,
Hate the dull enemy, suffer all the pain
Of old creation travailing for an unknown end,
Face crowding fools, and stand untouched by awe
For all the threatening powers of mortal law,
Big with established vengeance; so to stand
At perilous crossways for dear honor's sake,
Unwilling and unfrighted; so to take
Life and possessions, each in either hand,
And both hands open.

All those instruments,
Framed for activities, will wait a day—
Two or three days—expectant; like the men
Marshaled for service in well-ordered tents,
Who wait to hear their leader's voice again,
But he comes not, being killed upon the way.

Oh, powers unknown, untested, unfulfilled!
I could have led the assault over open ground,
Held the platoon unflinching; could have drilled
Battalions up to sharp perfection's edge
For a soldier's triumph; wandering could have found
Strange lands untraversed, crawled on the icy ledge
Of undiscovered mountains, hewn the ways
Through swamps of steaming, twilight forest, deep
In black ooze to my middle; could have known
Causes of things, the measured laws which keep
All stars in station, why solemn music sways
Hearts like a lake of osiers, why alone
Mankind of all his kindred beasts desires
To pierce beyond the world's encircling fires,
Far out to unimagined regions sweep,
And on the beatific vision gaze
Where dwells a Presence on a great white throne.

My shirt is warm with blood—warm, brown, and red;
My life, my only life is shed
With every drop, and gradually dies.

Oh not to die, not die before I see
Once more that lovely, fearless head,
And feel the rebellious heart confronting me,
And know the miracle of the sudden smile,
And live the immortal life of moments, while
I learn the revelation of the ethereal eyes!

The World of Books.

THE "NATION" OFFICE, THURSDAY NIGHT.

THE following is our weekly selection of books which we commend to the notice of our readers:—

- "Lord Granville Leveson Gower (First Earl Granville): Private Correspondence, 1781 to 1821." Edited by Castalia, Countess Granville. (Murray. Two vols. 32s. net.)
- "The Last Days of the French Monarchy." By Hilaire Belloc. (Chapman & Hall. 12s. 6d. net.)
- "The Self-Discovery of Russia." By J. Y. Simpson. (Constable. 6s. net.)
- "The Chevalier de Boufflers." By Nesta H. Webster. (Murray. 12s. net.)
- "The Titans." By Charles M. Doughty. (Duckworth. 5s. net.)
- "An Introduction to the Study of International Relations." By A. J. Grant and Others. (Macmillan. 2s. net.)
- "The Gollovlev Family." By N. E. Shchedrin. (Jarrold. 6s.)

SOME recent discussions of the authorship of Shakespeare's plays has given welcome evidence that literary controversy has not entirely lost its asperity. It is perhaps the only debt we owe the Baconians. For most of us have enough of the gladiatorial spirit to enjoy the sight of a couple of adversaries spiritedly pummelling one another in print. We are far from the days when one grammarian would say to a rival: "God confound you for your theory of the irregular verbs!" But the controversy about Shakespeare proves that we are not wholly degenerate. I have been reminded of the warmth of controversy in more vigorous times by reading Mr. Edward Clodd's Moncure Conway Memorial Lecture, which has just been published by Messrs. Watts. Mr. Clodd's subject is "Gibbon and Christianity," and he touches upon the attacks which led Gibbon to write his "Vindication." It is not the least of Mr. Clodd's merits that his lecture is likely to send some readers back to Gibbon's own pages. For my own part, I confess that my condition has some resemblance with that of Mr. Silas Wegg when he concluded his bargain for a regular course of Declining-and-Falling: "I haven't been not to say right slap through him, very lately, having been otherwise employed, Mr. Boffin."

BAGEHOT suggested that the way to enjoy Gibbon is not to read him at all, but to look at him, from outside, in the bookcase, and think how much there is within. "You will not like to take the book down; but you will think how much you could be delighted if you would." Unfortunately this pleasure is reserved for those who have already read Gibbon, and who can call to mind how his splendid sentences roll upon the tongue like an old and generous wine. Life is short and books are many, and to embark upon the "Decline and Fall" requires courage. But Bagehot's heresy has no application to the "Autobiography." It is true that, as somebody said, Gibbon wrote of himself as if he were the Roman Empire. That, indeed, is one of the charms of the book. Take, for example, his handling of the eight divines who attacked the five "secondary" causes which he gave for the rapid growth of the Christian Church, and to whom Mr. Clodd gives a section of his lecture:—

"My 'Vindication,' expressive of less anger than contempt, amused for the moment the busy and idle metropolis; and the most rational part of the laity, and even of the clergy, appear to have been satisfied of my innocence and accuracy. I would not print this 'Vindication' in quarto, lest it should be bound and preserved with the history itself. . . . A victory over such antagonists was a sufficient humiliation. They, however, were rewarded in this world. Poor Chelsum was indeed neglected; and I dare not boast the making Dr. Watson a bishop; he is a prelate of a large mind and liberal spirit; but I enjoyed the pleasure of giving a royal pension to Mr. Davies, and of collating Dr. Apthorpe to an archiepiscopal living."

LESLIE STEPHEN has a passage in which he writes of "the peculiar pleasure of transporting ourselves to the middle of the eighteenth century." One of the delights of that delightful period, he says, is that one could actually hear talk which was worth writing down. I suppose there is no man of a bookish turn who has not longed for a Time Machine which would enable him to spend an evening in Johnson's Club. Johnson and Gibbon did not hit it off very well, or so Boswell, at any rate, would have us believe.

Perhaps this comes from Boswell's own dislike. "Gibbon is an ugly, affected, disgusting fellow," he wrote, "and poisons our Literary Club to me." A pleasanter picture of these two giants is given by George Colman in his "Random Recollections." It is unhackneyed enough to deserve quotation:—

"The learned Gibbon was a curious counterbalance to the learned (may I not say less learned?) Johnson. Their manners and taste, both in writing and conversation, were as different as their habiliments. On the day I first sat down with Johnson, in his rusty brown suit, and his black worsted stockings, Gibbon was placed opposite to me in a suit of flowered velvet, with a bag and sword. Each had his measured phraseology; and Johnson's famous parallel between Dryden and Pope might be loosely parodied in reference to himself and Gibbon: Johnson's style was grand, and Gibbon's elegant: the stateliness of the former was sometimes pedantic, and the latter was occasionally finical. Johnson marched to kettledrums and trumpets; Gibbon moved to flutes and hautboys: Johnson hewed passages through the Alps, while Gibbon levelled walks through parks and gardens. Mauled as I had been by Johnson, Gibbon poured balm upon my bruises by condescending, once or twice in the course of the evening, to talk with me: the great historian was light and playful . . . —still his mannerism prevailed; still he tapped his snuff-box; still he smirked and smiled and rounded his periods with the same air of good breeding. . . . His mouth, mellifluous as Plato's, was a round hole nearly in the centre of his visage."

THERE is little doubt that if Gibbon had lived some years longer, he would have given the world a work which would have formed an interesting counterpart to Johnson's "Lives of the Poets." Writing to Lord Sheffield from Lausanne in January, 1793, of the slow progress of the "Autobiography," he added: "I have long revolved in my mind another scheme of biographical writing: the Lives, or rather the Characters, of the most eminent Persons in Arts and Arms, in Church and State, who have flourished in Britain from the reign of Henry the Eighth to the present age." The subject, as he says, "would afford a rich display of human nature and domestic manners," and to those who are fond of brief biographies—undoubtedly one of the most fascinating of literary forms—the loss is inestimable. But the most entertaining feature in the project was Gibbon's method of securing a proper price for his work. He asked Lord Sheffield to sound George Nicol, the bookseller, and gave precise directions as to the best procedure:—

"In your walk through Pall Mall you may call on the bookseller, who appeared to me an intelligent man, and, after some general questions about his edition of Shakespeare, you may open the British portraits as an idea of your own, to which I am perfectly a stranger. If he kindles at the thought, and eagerly claims my alliance, you will begin to hesitate. 'I am afraid, Mr. Nicol, that we shall hardly persuade my friend to engage in so great a work. Gibbon is old, and rich, and lazy.' However, you may make the trial, and if you have a mind to write to Lausanne (as I do not know when he will be in England) I will send the application."

Was ever a more delicious touch than "Gibbon is old, and rich, and lazy"?

To describe the author of the "Decline and Fall" as lazy, might seem absurd, but he often spoke of his own indolence, and at least one of his contemporaries bears him out. The collection of "Maloniana," which ends Prior's "Life of Malone," a book I mentioned a couple of weeks ago, has the following:—

"Mr. Gibbon, the historian, is so exceedingly indolent that he never even pares his nails. His servant, while Gibbon is reading, takes up one of his hands, and when he has performed the operation, lays it down, and then manages the other—the patient in the meanwhile scarcely knowing what is going on, and quietly pursuing his studies."

I would refer readers who are curious about Gibbon's personal appearance to an anecdote on the same page of the same work.

I HEAR through a Danish correspondent that Dr. Georg Brandes is finishing a book on Voltaire, that other famous exile of Lausanne. It was begun as long ago as 1906, but the task of reading through the immense amount that Voltaire wrote, and the immense amount that has been written about him, has proved longer than Dr. Brandes anticipated. According to my correspondent, the book promises to be a very full and considered study of Voltaire's life and activity.

PENGUIN.

Reviews.

CAMILLE DESMOULINS.

"Camille Desmoulins: A Biography." By VIOLET METHLEY.
(Seeker. 15s. net.)

EVERYBODY called him Camille, without the surname. Most of those who loved him—and most of those who knew him loved him—added an adjective expressive of a kind of tenderness and friendliness: "Our little Camille"; or the "good boy," or Mirabeau's "poor Camille," or Robespierre's "spoilt child with good dispositions" when he was trying to save him against the wrath of the Jacobins. And much of his life bears out this quality. He was a naïve, innocent, fascinating child, the incarnation of the Revolution and of Hopes, the hero of Lenotre's "Idyll of the Revolution," with Lucile and the "little serpent" Horace; "a prey of impulses," as the historian calls him, "the sport of persons, a fascinating child." This "gamin de Paris du journalisme," with a genius for theatrical effect, he could write home proudly to his father in the country, who is disturbed by reports of his doings in Paris: "Those who speak ill of me deceive you; they lie to themselves, and at the bottom of their hearts they wish to have a son like me."

Yet this childish spirit was associated—as perhaps in all children—with sudden hatreds, sulkiness, and with outbreaks of genius which made his writing for the time the most distinguished in France, and sent many greater men to their death. His pamphlets were great blows, and none who fell under his lash ever forgave him again. At one time he confesses that he loves Mirabeau "comme une maîtresse." At another time he rejects Mirabeau's attempts at reconciliation over an absurd quarrel of offended pride. "Adieu, good boy," writes the great man; "you deserve to be loved, notwithstanding your fiery flights." But when Mirabeau dies his epitaph in public from Camille is all of contempt and scorn of the "actor," and of a "corrupt nation" who "prostrates itself before his tomb." Yet behind is the "Little Camille," divorced from this furious journalism and invective, which seems as if written by another hand. "Death, which knits up again every attachment," he confesses, "brought me back to his house before it entered there, as, indeed, any peril of his would have brought me back; and it was not my fault if his servants did not tell him how much I grieved for his illness. But I could do no more than write my name at his door. I had preferred my love for truth to the friendship of Mirabeau."

Like all the great actors on this fiery stage of the Revolution, Camille was not of Paris at all. He had been sucked into the vortex from an upbringing in a small white-washed house in the Rue Grand Pond in Guise in Picardy, where his father, civil and criminal lieutenant-general, dozed through the dignified, honorable life of a country lawyer, being something of a scholar also. But, just as Danton, from Arciss-sur-Aube, and Robespierre, a country attorney, at Arras, were drawn irresistibly to the centre of the great upheavals, so Camille, a lawyer also, and educated with Robespierre at the College of St. Louis le Grand, was drawn there also, until he became more typically a Parisian than the Parisians themselves. For the Revolution was a bourgeois revolution, scrupulously observant of the letter of the law, carried forward by men of education and substance, in no way resembling the social orgy which it has been sometimes said to be. Camille was emphatically the voice of it, in its generosity and its cruelty, its uncertainty, its passionate hatreds, its energy driven by the violence of despair. Hope for Liberty in France and the whole world, for modest subsistence on the classical model which he was never tired of repeating, for the destruction of the old order, the old kings, the old oppressions, rings through all his pages. At the beginning, in 1789, he acknowledges that he was probably one of only ten convinced Republicans alive in Paris. At the end, in the last and unpublished number of "Le Vieux Cordelier," he defiantly asserts his belief in "Liberty" as humanity; that Liberty is magnanimous; that "she would not insult a condemned criminal at the foot of the guillotine and after his execution, because death wipes out the crime." He would have liked to have lived, in perpetual spring and summer, amidst a world free from

crime, in the little cottage at Bourg-la-Reine, with the old courtyard and the garden shaded by trees and bordered by lindens—writing on the happiness of mankind, with Lucile and Horace; and visitors from Paris, recognizing his greatness, and giving him good talk and discussing the future tranquil progress of the world in happiness and intelligence. "I would have been a good father," he wrote from the Luxembourg prison to Lucile—in a letter she never received.

Yet this "Little Camille" was the operative force in three out of the four great crises of the Revolution, and only second to Danton in the fourth, which was the greatest of all. It was he who mounted upon a table in the garden of the Palais Royal on the sunny morning of July 12th, 1789, made the one speech of his life. "To arms! To arms!" he cried; "take all of you green cockades, the color of hope." "For that instant," his biographer declared, "stammering, insignificant Camille was beside himself—nay, inspired. With face aglow and eyes wide-blazing, with his long, dishevelled hair flung back wildly, and his hoarse, weak voice strained to the utmost, he flung out the words which called a nation to arms." Two days afterwards the Bastille fell—a symbol only, for only seven old, weak prisoners tottered out through its gateways; but a triumph of the "imponderables," in its revelation that the France of the inheritors of Louis XIV. was impotent before the spirit and devotion of the new age. "I had at that time," wrote Camille, "all the daring of the Revolution."

The second was the destruction of the Girondins. In May, 1793, after a series of attacks on them, he published his "L'Histoire des Brissotins." There is little doubt that it was the chief instrument in bringing down the fall of the Government. It enjoyed what for those days was an immense circulation. With bitter sarcasm, wit, raillery, and all the arts of invective, Camille impeached these honorable Republicans. It was written at Robespierre's direct request. All the accusations are vague and undefined, with a continuous play on the suspicions and terrors of the people. The result was imprisonment, flight, civil war, the destruction of many in solitary death, and the unforgettable end. All Camille's judgments were intellectual judgments. He lived in the world of journalism, calling down his classical illustrations, loving an epigram well turned and a sentence which he knew would wound. When his words became actions he collapsed altogether, on hearing at the Revolutionary Tribunal the sentences of death of his old friends and comrades. "My God! My God! It is I who have killed them!" he cried, fainting. Brissot and Pétion had been witnesses of his marriage in a day given over to merriment—Brissot and Maximilian Robespierre.

And the third step—and the last—was Camille's work at the end of that year of horrors, when "Terror had become the order of the day," and the Committee of Public Safety could not send victims too rapidly to the Revolutionary Tribunal and the Tribunal to the guillotine. Deliberately, defiantly, counting the cost, and knowing not only the madness of the people, but the fear of those in authority of any attempt which would mitigate that madness—a mitigation which would mean their death—he took up his pen to preach mercy and justice. The impulse seems to have come from Danton before his fatal retreat to Arciss-sur-Aube, on that famous evening when those two were hurrying home from the Convention. At the Quai des Lunettes, with the crimson light of sunset reflected in the river, Danton paused to cry out: "Look! See how much blood! The Seine runs blood. Ah! Too much blood has been spilt! Come! take up your pen again. Write and demand clemency—I will support you!" The first number of "Le Vieux Cordelier" appeared on December 5th, 1793, bearing as motto the words of Machiavelli: "As soon as those who govern are hated, their rivals will begin to be admired." Seven numbers only appeared—the last printed, but not published till forty years after his death. Together they appear as the finest piece of literature left by the Revolution. Into this tremendous and noble plea for a Committee of Clemency and the staying of the shedding of innocent blood, Camille flung all the reputation he had gained in Paris as a writer and Republican, all his power of satire and invective—regardless of consequences, heedless of the dominating presence of the guillotine, as if fey, enchanted, careless of life. In those three years of madness indeed, especially in the later

months, a kind of desire of death came upon all the chief actors of the drama. Mirabeau went down without fear, uttering strange sentences as to his own belief and as to the fate of France. The Girondins went up to their doom singing. Danton could have saved himself again and again, but had become weary of blood and the desperate ways of men: "Resist? No. Enough blood has been shed; I would rather die myself." Even Robespierre might have triumphed had he summoned the section to his defence. He refused to raise the people against the Convention. Camille was warned again and again of the inevitable result of his propaganda. Robespierre certainly sanctioned and assisted the earlier numbers in order to rid himself of the *enragés*—Hébert and his madmen. He would have spared Camille if he could; but the sheath of the sword had been flung down, and one or other must die. It was Camille and Danton who were first doomed. But their destruction made his imperative when, some three months afterwards, the gods had grown tired of blood.

It was the third and fourth numbers of "*Le Vieux Cordelier*" which first revealed a voice crying for clemency, powerful enough even to move the crowd which demanded the blood of suspects. The third is an elaborate similarity drawn between the Law of Suspects and the system denounced by Tacitus; or rather a description of the system denounced by Tacitus so fashioned that all could understand; asserting that "this which Tacitus called despotism and the worst of Governments sixteen centuries ago, cannot to-day be called the best of all possible worlds." For No. 4 the demand was amazing:—

"Upon the 21st of December," says Michelet, "early in the morning a long queue of purchasers gathered at the door of the booksellers, who fought with each other for the possession of the fourth number. They paid for it at second hand, at third hand, the price rose always, until it reached as much as one louis for one copy. People read it in the streets in their impatience, choked with tears. From the very heart of France had burst forth the voice of humanity, of blind, impotent, all-powerful pity, that voice of compassion which pierces through walls and beats down strong fortresses."

He succeeded in destroying the madmen *enragés*. But he could not stay the ever swelling torrent of blood which in this early hot spring was sweeping "the unfortunates who crowd the prisons of Paris," "not worthy of the mighty anger of the Republic"—"women, children, the old men, the sick, and the cowardly"—along the daily path to dusty death. He appeals alike to reason and to passion. To reason—"You think to exterminate all your enemies by means of the guillotine! But could there possibly be greater folly? Can you kill one person upon the scaffold without making for yourself ten more enemies amongst his family or his friends?" And to passion when he flays the scabrous Hébert for prostituting the Republic in the eyes of the world "as if no one could speak (to Mr. Pitt) save in language like thine: as if such was the speech of the Convention and of the Committee of Public Safety: as if thy filthiness was that of the nation: as if a sewer of Paris was the Seine." Or, again (and this is an example of his style):—

"Even if, which seems impossible, calumny and crime should for a moment triumph over virtue, can one believe that even upon the scaffold, sustained by the consciousness that I have passionately loved my country and the Republic, sustained by the thought of the eternal testimony of the centuries, surrounded by the esteem and regret of all true Republicans, can one believe that I would wish to change my fate for the fortune of that miserable Hébert, who in his journal, drives to despair twenty classes of citizens and more than three millions of Frenchmen, of whom he says anathema and whom he consigns to death sweepingly in one common conscription: who to stifle his remorse and his calumnies has been obliged to resort to a drunkenness more complete than that of wine, and to lick, unceasingly, the blood at the foot of the guillotine?"

The rest is history: the early morning arrest of Camille and Danton: the indifference and fierce laughter of the latter: Camille's exquisite and tender letters from his prison to Lucile, which are not only historic documents, but stand apart in the tragic and moving record of French literature. Camille's famous retort to the interrogation, "I am thirty-three, the age of the Sansculotte Jesus when he died: a critical age for every patriot." And the last scene, from Danton's thunderings against his accusers, which frightened them so greatly that they were compelled to conclude the trial

with the sentence of outlawry, to the tumbril cart journeying through the immense crowds, hurling curses on those who had been their idols, with Danton supporting the half-dead Fabre d'Eglantine on the one hand, and the half-mad Camille on the other—the latter proclaiming that his only crime had been pity and (opposite the house of Robespierre) shouting to him shortly to join him among the shades. He faced death at the end with dignity, the last of those who ascended the scaffold to die, before Danton himself, like a lion, passed from long quietness into rest. A few days afterwards Lucile, all happiness and going to death as a bride, followed her husband joyfully. "They have assassinated the best of men," she said; "if I do not hate them for that, I should bless them for the service they have done me this day."

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A GALLANT SISYPHUS.

"The Titans." By CHARLES M. DOUGHTY. (Duckworth. 5s. net.)

ONE of the particular difficulties of criticism is to give a just estimate of a work which bids defiance to the characteristic thought and manner of its age, which violates all the recognized canons of style, and, disdaining to be of any school of expression, depends for its effect upon a pugnaciously individual genius. How rarely criticism gives the correct answer to such a question the history of literature supplies many examples. How did the eighteenth century receive Blake? With what haughtiness Hazlitt thundered against the sweet mingling of learning and chivalry in the sonnets of Sir Philip Sidney! What would Vaughan have thought of Pope, or Pope of Vaughan? And Shakespeare of Dryden or Dryden of Shakespeare? Such incongruities can be multiplied indefinitely. And the twentieth century is confronted with Mr. Doughty. Now, Mr. Doughty's "*Wanderings in Arabia*" is a prose epic, which may possibly outlive the entire output of living writers. Is there a shilling edition of it? Is it in the library of every citizen with a pretence to literary taste? To reply with the truism that great literature must depend for its laurels upon the appreciation of posterity rather than its contemporaries, is not adequate. For "*Wanderings in Arabia*" is unique in a double sense. The only way we can describe it is that it is just the kind of book that Lamb would have discovered, as he rediscovered the "*Anatomy of Melancholy*," to the credit of his perception and to the woe of all subsequent book-lovers, who, if Lamb had died of the measles in childhood, would now be paying one-sixth of its present value in a seventeenth-century folio edition. And "*Wanderings in Arabia*" is precisely the "*Anatomy*" of this age, with no hall-mark of antiquity upon it.

But the difficulty is enhanced when we come to Mr. Doughty's poetry. For it is not only strange, unfamiliar, evasive; it is a question whether it is much else. The critic, in fact, if he is to give it its due and only its due, is almost forced into the mathematical pedantry of subtraction and addition. He has, that is to say, to subtract the defects and add the virtues, and then decide whether, in the final enumeration, he has a balance or has overdrawn the account. It is a formal and perhaps a little cowardly method, but if it is unjust to Mr. Doughty, that is to some extent his fault.

Take "*The Titans*" then as a deposit, and see how much must be deducted. First of all, there is Mr. Doughty's language. It is archaic throughout, and derives almost exclusively from an Anglo-Saxon source. And what we have to ask ourselves is whether the peculiar terms he uses are capable of being imaginatively transformed, by the force of genius, into an instrument proper to Mr. Doughty's purpose, and whether such terms can, by this method, pass

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into the universal currency of poetry. For beyond the recognizable words, such as "salvage" for "savage," "grame," "swink," "welked," "kirtle," "uneath," "immane," "couth," and so on, he has many others— innumerable others, which are either frank neologisms, or belong solely to Anglo-Saxon or are invented on an analogy with it. For instance, "derne," "sythes," "thretes," "quiddering," "rother," "heydeguyes," "harrish," "rivelled," "sarks," "saies," "shealings," "louner," "faxed," "a cankered edder," "borel wights with tawny glibs," "caract," "whelve," and others. They all have a kind of euphonious quality—"the quiddering swallow" is charming—but the strain upon the reader, the possibility of replacing such words by as gracious and more modern equivalents, the sense of a cast-iron theory behind them, and the knowledge that such archaisms are not only grossly artificial to-day, but that our more modern tongue can supply every bit as many of the—shall we say, boulderish?—terms Mr. Doughty's genius requires, weight the scale heavily on the other side. An even less excusable departure lies in Mr. Doughty's inversions. Now the most tortured inversion can be justified, if in any way it adds to the melody, point, stress, or rhythm of the line. After all, an inversion is one of the legitimate ways of distinguishing between verse and prose. But Mr. Doughty does not work on this principle at all. In countless examples, his inversions are purely wilful—made for the sake of inversion:—

"Were woodshaws harbours, ere yet Time named was,"

And:—

"hath
He already it stained with purple gore, in fight;"

And:—

"Is this the earth, which called God forth, of naught."

In what way is the swing and metre of the line impaired by reverting to the natural order: "This is the earth, which God called forth, of naught"? On the contrary, it is a better line. Indeed these transpositions, which occur in page after page, are as deliberate and unnatural as "guirlands" for garlands, "adawed" for awed; and "habitaclles," which is, presumably, a marriage between "tabernacles" and "habitations." It is little wonder that Mr. Doughty opens himself to the charge of harshness, obscurity, and incongruousness, especially as ("another only swevens meets of dread," "Crows ferry, on twinned swart pens! part culvers forth") inversion and disused words are not his only methods of puzzling the reader. A lesser fault is his accentuation. He does not by any means leave it to his reader to harmonize his stresses, but throws dashes over the words himself. But not over the most difficult so much as the most obvious lines. Thus, he is constantly throwing an accent over monosyllables and stressing those syllables which carry their own: "Herd-folk in whom there yet remaineth strength"—the accent might just as well be on the "Herd," and could be nowhere else but on "main."

These criticisms may appear to be pettifogging; they would be, were it not for the fact that the errors which provoke them are not casual and incidental, but strewn broadcast over the text. Nor can they be properly isolated from the text. On the contrary, they are the fruit of a giant labor, a violent enterprise which has failed to achieve its aim, and has twisted and distorted itself in a heroic effort to retrieve that failure. For Mr. Doughty has, in the first instance, imposed a task upon himself almost foredoomed to it. He does not occupy himself with the siege of the gods by the Titans alone. His epic is divided into six books. In the first, we have the genesis of the world out of chaos; in the second, the birth of man and the warlike preparations of the Titans; in the third, their warfare and defeat; in the fourth, the petrification of the Titans, the revival of the world, the migration of man, his wanderings in the desert, his discovery of Eden, and the building of his town and temple; in the fifth, the foundation of religion and of the "Art of Scripture," and the period of wars and pestilence; in the sixth, the restoration of peace and the triumph of man in chaining the Titans and employing them for human needs and sustenance—a sort of allegory of science and machinery. The whole is an extraordinary blend of Biblical and Norse tradition and of Mr. Doughty's own invention. A Titanic

undertaking, indeed, and small wonder if, like his Titans, he fails to scale the pinnacles of the true epic. It is almost inconceivable that anybody, in the days of the tabloid Press, should gird his loins to such an endeavor. But therein lies the virtue of "The Titans," a virtue which well-nigh atones for the failure to achieve what prompted it. Sharply judged, his poem is without proper continuity, its movement is unspeakably cumbrous, its machinery clumsy, its blank verse crabbed and a-symmetrical, its subject confused between allegory, history, mythology, symbolism, and narrative, and its interest unsustained and with far too many flat intervals. Judged kindly, it is the splendid and massive travail of a forlorn man of genius, who will devour a whole bakery rather than be content with the half-loaf. And there are many fine passages, which, to say the least, strain towards sublimity:—

"To look upon that hellish face;
Wasted with hunger, thirst, wounds, nakedness;
Foul weathers, Pestilence; (Ay me!) an human breast,
It would affray. Full of man-quelling thought.
Lo! a sharp-set jowl, with leer of outlawed wolf:
(Which every hand might slay and have a thank!)
Those wildered looks of his, with madness fraught!
Those eyes wherein spring lecher gleams unglad;
He rolls, breathes thick, and slavers in his beard.
And when his heart flames, in his oft access,
In frenzied feral laughter! War breaks forth."

But we shudder to think what Horace Walpole would have thought of it!

A LIFE OF COLERIDGE-TAYLOR.

"Samuel Coleridge-Taylor, Musician: His Life and Letters." By W. BERWICK SAYERS. (Cassell, 7s. 6d. net.)

In more senses than one, so it seems to us, Coleridge-Taylor was the last man in the world to deserve such a biography as this. First, because the ponderous and pompous style of his biographer is peculiarly unsuited to the fresh and ingenuous talent of the composer of "Hiawatha"; secondly, because (to speak quite frankly) neither his musical nor his intellectual personality called for a study in 311 rather large pages.

Far be it from us to minimize Coleridge-Taylor's remarkable gifts. He had genuine inspiration, a real sense of color in music, and a rhythmical susceptibility better developed than in most of his contemporaries. Above all, he was extremely musical. But, *pace* Mr. Berwick Sayers, the critics were probably right in thinking him essentially "a man of one work." Did anything else he wrote ever reach the level of genuine inspiration of the "Hiawatha" trilogy? We doubt it. That remarkable work, or at any rate the last two parts of it, seems to us to remain as the high-water mark of what may perhaps be called "English choral-society culture." The defect, perhaps, indeed, the tragedy, of Coleridge-Taylor was that he never rose above that culture. His æsthetic and intellectual equipment was of the slightest. Like the Dvorak whom he so passionately—and, in our opinion, so fortunately—worshipped, he knew very little outside music. And, in the present state of European music, such a limitation becomes an increasingly overwhelming handicap. For instance, his views on literature were of the most extraordinary kind. He thought that the blank verse of Stephen Phillips's "Ulysses" was "the greatest he had ever heard." It is hardly surprising with views like this that he came to grief over the choice of his librettos. The failures of his opera "Thelma," of "Endymion's Dream," and the "Bon-Bon Suite" show the direct disadvantages of such an inferior education.

But the indirect disadvantages are hardly less patent. His utter failure to understand the eighteenth century is proved by his criticisms of Handel as "crude and bare," of Mozart and Haydn as "artificial and thin," while his lack of interest in the twentieth is clearly shown not only by his own music but by the fact that the names of Strauss and Debussy, if we are not mistaken, are mentioned but once—and that in the most casual manner—throughout the whole biography. We would suggest to Mr. Berwick Sayers that this is the true reason of the "conspiracy of silence" of which he complains on page 106. We share, speaking generally, Coleridge-Taylor's own views on the gentlemen who "do" music for the London Press, but the period between

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1900-1912 was, musically, an extremely exciting one, and it is only natural that the critics should have been more interested in other compositions. The decade which witnessed the popularization of Debussy and Strauss, the rise of the "young British School" (though we agree with a great deal of Coleridge-Taylor's criticism of it) and the first introduction of modern Russian music to Western Europe, had little time to spare for "Meg Blane," "Kubla Khan," and "The Atonement." Incidentally, however, one cannot help feeling surprised and shocked that the Royal College of Music should have permitted a pupil so talented musically to be launched upon the world with such an inferior æsthetic education. It points to a very grave defect in our system of musical training; and, in its way, it is as much a tragedy as the fact that the composer of the most popular modern English cantata was allowed to die in comparative poverty.

Turning for a brief moment to the biography itself, we have no desire to be hard on Mr. Sayers, who has obviously gone about his work with great enthusiasm and conscientiousness. But we are bound to say that a more tiresome maze of mediocre musical criticisms, obscure provincial and suburban musical societies, poor anecdotes, undistinguished and often pointless letters, it has rarely been our misfortune to traverse. Had Mr. Sayers shortened his book by half, and written naturally and straightforwardly, he would have produced quite an interesting record of a very simple and lovable personality. As it is, we come across passages like this:—

"Coleridge's step-father was referred to by his own son as an 'oily' man, and, as far as I can recollect, was employed in an oil factory of some sort, or in some employment which produced oil-saturated garments."

Or again:—

"Beauty, indeed, it is in which the eye leaps unconcerned over the not inconsiderable, but withal leafy, ranges of streets in Anerley and Norwood, to a vast reach of varying loveliness of amber heaths, shining green fields, hills . . . dales . . . and . . . the South Downs. Such scenes wrought themselves into the very heart-fibres of the man. In words they found the simplest expression from him: 'What a lovely view!'"

Admirers of Mr. Belloc will be irresistibly reminded of yet another inhabitant of Norwood, the unfortunate Mr. Emmanuel Burden—which is indeed very hard luck on poor Coleridge-Taylor!

ROMANTICS.

"The Night Cometh." By PAUL BOURGET. Translated by J. F. LEES. (Chatto & Windus. 6s.)

"David Blaise." By E. F. BENSON. (Hodder & Stoughton. 6s.)

"Earth to Earth." By RICHARD DEHAN. (Heinemann. 6s.)

WE are inclined, perhaps, to be a little severe on the realists, chiefly because they have embraced a false theory of art, and, in consequence of that theory, have travelled a road of dullness, pointlessness, and sheer length for length's sake, with pilgrim zeal. But, for all their faults, they are at least trying to do something disinterestedly and purposefully, to spin threads out of their own cocoons, independently of commercial values and popular routine, which is more than can be said for the average romantic, who, content with the values he finds ready-made to his hand, and without any personal feelings about life or art at all, clings to illusions masquerading as romance.

M. Bourget obviously does not fall within this category. He is a distinguished artist, and one of the generals of the new Catholic movement in France. He is a romantic idealist of ardent temper, whom his bitterest enemies cannot fail to esteem, and his ideas have been consistently embodied in a vigorous, well-stocked, and richly-colored style. And yet, for all the intensity of its drama, the resources of its workmanship, the fertility and movement of its thought, there is something wrong with his latest book, published in Paris last year under the title of "*Le Sens de la Mort*." And the translation, abominable (there is no other word for it) as it is, does not entirely explain the sense of revolt which all the admiration for M. Bourget's refinement of literary skill cannot dispel. For all that, he is certainly a victim of Mr. Lees's rendering, whose method is to use as many

woolly Latinisms as he can exhume. He uses "perspicacious" for "perspicuous" continually; for a disaster "a catastrophic phenomenon"; for sounding a patient in the medical sense, "I have never either questioned or auscultated him." Nor can we conceive the most austere scientific doctors conversing with each other and using such terms as "an intense, terebrating, tearing pain," or, "his fists on the epigastrium." For the sake of consistency, they might at least have said "the digital extremities on the epigastrium." And when one of the characters has a severe breakdown, it is usual to say that he had a "collapse," and not a "collapsus." And though we may pass over the remark that the Kaiser "was suffering from a suppurative and incurable otitis," expressions like "How you say that?" "an indescribable something," "autocar," and "utilizable," cannot be gathered into the loosest and widest professional fold of medical jargon. We do not know how far M. Bourget is responsible for all this jargon scattered broadcast through the book; but at least Mr. Lees should have remembered that he was translating a novel for the use of the English public, and not as a serial in the pages of the "*Lancet*" or the "*British Medical Journal*."

The scene in "*Le Sens de la Mort*" is laid in a Parisian hospital during the first few months of the war. It is told in the person of the assistant of the famous surgeon, Ortègue, a free-thinker, of a hard, stoic, imperious disposition, whose doctrine is that "one can only act on facts with facts"—as Mr. Lees, or even perhaps M. Bourget, might have called him, a "phenomenalist." His beautiful wife, twenty years younger than Ortègue, influenced by his ideas, her personality submerged in his, loves him out of a sense of duty and gratitude rather than by nature. Ortègue is stricken with a malignant cancer, and, his stern morality breaking down under his wild devotion to his wife and the disintegrating influence of pain and morphia, he makes a compact with her that they will both commit suicide on the same day. Powerful and tragic as is the portrait of Ortègue, it is a little difficult to realize his motive in claiming this pledge. An inhuman jealousy of her life apart from his is the only explanation, since, believing as he does in annihilation, she could be of little enough solace to him in another world. At the same time, M. Bourget hints that the solitude of death is unbearable to him. If the author uses this pledge as a touchstone of Ortègue's unconscious belief in immortality, another and more subtle construction can be placed on Ortègue's part. But his artistry wavers, and the issue is not at all clear. The rest of the story is devoted to the wife's awakening consciousness of her personality, and, through the influence of Le Gallic, a young wounded officer of rigidly Catholic persuasion, to her final repudiation of her promise to her husband. It needs no exposition to show what fine literary material can be made out of a situation so full of force and originality. And it is not by the artist's taking every advantage of it, but in the way he does it, that we are alienated. M. Bourget's inflexible ideas impose themselves too stringently on his drama. Le Gallic is merely a vehicle of them, and Le Gallic, in so far as he is alive at all, is too much of a theatrical prig for us to keep our sympathies in the quarter the author desires. And there is something detestable, abhorrent to the natural humanity and vitality of mankind in the fetish of death as a religious sacrifice. It may be as the occasion dictates, but let us not harden it into a deliberate creed of purification. Let us not glorify the war from that point of view or refuse to follow such a theory to its logical conclusion (as we are under the impression that M. Bourget does not refuse to do)—that all wars can and must be glorified to that end. M. Bourget, in fact, is not even ambiguous upon this point:—

"He said to the rich, Abandon your riches. He did not say to the Centurion, Abandon your regiment. And it is the Centurion who has marked the cross with his: *Domine, non sum dignus*. . . . The soldier's words are repeated daily at the altar of the priest, before the Communion. The Army has the last word at the Holy Sacrifice."

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of credit and renown at his preparatory school. In the last, he is still a schoolboy, though a prefect, at Marchester, a public school, and is of even more sounding credit and loftier renown. His achievements between the first and last consist in forming lasting friendship with the adoring "Bags" and the heroic Maddox, in getting in and out of rather tepid water, and in becoming a particularly cunning googly bowler. And yet, with this creditable, if rather normal record, Mr. Benson must, Little by Little, father the honest David upon Eric—the immaculate Eric—of our juvenile edification. Towards the end of the book, the Eric atmosphere finally envelops the hapless David, who is made to leap in front of a runaway horse, bring it to a standstill, and (to slow music) nearly to die of his injuries, amid the prayers of the headmaster and his schoolfellows for his recovery. For the life of us, we cannot think why Mr. Benson must attach the odor of sanctity to this perfectly average boy. To send down a slow ball which breaks in sharply from leg with the same action as a straight, fast ball on the off stump does not somehow seem to us an adequate reason.

"Richard Dehan" gives us this time a collection of short stories, for which, after the numbing prolixity of "The Dop Doctor" and "The Man of Iron," we are grateful. They are not short stories in the strict sense of the word, but sensational or sentimental situations, appropriately clothed in decorative and periphrastic style. So-and-So, for instance, would not smoke cigarettes, but be "a confirmed votary of the Turkish weed." Still, a few of the stories, if we can shut our ears to the more resounding clichés, are readable enough.

BOOKS IN BRIEF.

"War and Civilization: An Open Letter to a Swedish Professor." By J. M. ROBERTSON, M.P. (Allen & Unwin. 2s. 6d. net.)

MR. ROBERTSON'S book is an answer to a work by Dr. Gustav Steffen, Professor of Economics and Sociology at Stockholm. Dr. Steffen professes to set forth the "rights and wrongs" of the present war, and he delivers judgment on the German side. In Mr. Robertson he has met more than his match as a controversialist. Mr. Robertson's vindication of the Allied position covers the ground step by step, and is as convincing as it is masterly in arrangement and exposition. We have got a little weary by this time of controversies about the responsibility for the war, but if anybody wishes to realize how strong the Allied case really is, he will find it excellently set forth by Mr. Robertson.

The Week in the City.

THE City has been quiet this week, and not much has been doing on the Stock Exchange. There is, perhaps, a little anxiety about the financial weakness of France, as evidenced by the exchanges, which have recently stood at from 28.30 frs. to 28.80 frs. to the £. Owing to the prohibition of gold exports, English paper currency in Paris is more sought after than gold sovereigns. The French loan has been rather weak, as a falling exchange will reduce the value of the next coupon. The effect of the income-tax is popularizing stock like underground income bonds, which pay their interest free of tax. Belgian Threes have been bought at 61, and there has been a firmer tone among gilt-edged stocks since Mr.

Asquith's pronouncement about peace conditions, which seems to favor prospects of a settlement before debts become unmanageable. Neutrals who have recently come from Germany through Scandinavia say that change of feeling there is pronounced, and that the desire for peace has become very strong, even in official circles. The Money and Discount Markets have been fairly steady. Treasury Bills have been in great demand, and have reached the colossal figure of 583 millions. Investors buy them so that they can make sure of having plenty of funds for business or speculative purposes when the moment of peace arrives.

THE GRAND TRUNK REPORT.

The preliminary figures of the Grand Trunk Railway Company of Canada, published in the middle of February, showed a good improvement on the results for the year 1914, which were most disappointing. The full dividend on the Guaranteed Stock is resumed, but Preference shareholders still go without any distribution. The full report, just issued, shows that gross revenue has declined, but there has been a corresponding reduction in expenditure, as the following figures show:—

	1914.	1915.	Inc. or Dec.
	£	£	£
Receipts	8,596,768	8,292,668	—304,080
Expenditure	6,841,919	6,511,257	—330,662
Ratio	79.5%	78.5%	—1.0%
	1,754,849	1,781,431	+ 26,582
Misc. Receipts, Rentals, &c.	682,743	759,270	+ 76,527
	2,437,592	2,540,701	+ 103,109

The loss in receipts is almost entirely on account of smaller passenger traffic, while the bulk of the reduction in expenses has taken place under the heading of transportation. Fixed charges against net revenue, an item which has been steadily growing for years past, are £17,540 higher, at £2,030,017, leaving a surplus of £510,684, or £85,569 more than a year ago. After payment of the 4 per cent. dividend on the guaranteed stock a balance of £15,007 remains to be carried forward. Grand Trunk stocks stand well below the pre-war level, although there was a good deal of activity in the second half of last year. The 4 per cent. Guaranteed Stock gives a return of £6 3s. per cent. at the present quotation, while the Five and Four per Cent. Perpetual Debenture stocks yield £5 7s. 3d. and £5 12s. per cent. respectively.

INCOME TAX.

Beyond causing a marking down of fixed interest securities, the raising of the income-tax to 5s. in the £ has not had much effect on the Stock Exchange. But while a net return of £3 15s. was obtainable hitherto on a 4½ per cent. stock, the new rate of tax makes it necessary to hold a 5 per cent. stock to get the same return, and this is, of course, a further argument for the final removal of all minimum prices which remain, including those on Home Railway prior charges. The method adopted, however, of deducting the full rate of tax from all dividends and leaving those who are not liable for the maximum rate to recover the excess at the end of the year is proving unpopular. Owing to the wide subscriptions to the War Loans a larger number of persons with only moderate incomes are now in receipt of a certain amount of unearned income, and it has been suggested that a uniform deduction of 4s. in the £ from dividends and interest and a collection of the difference by direct assessment where necessary would meet the case, and would also save the revenue officials a vast amount of labor. The practice of paying dividends free of income-tax favored amongst others by most of the banks has been abandoned during the past few years, but in certain quarters this method is again being advocated.

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